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36 PAGES

150 FILS

VIVA records KD 40 mln net profit for 2017

Details Page 25 —



KUNA photo Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, along with his accompany-ing official delegation (not pictured), attended on Thursday the conclusion ceremony of King Abdul Aziz's second Festival for

Syrian Kurds push US to stop Turkey

Ankara denounces Paris

BEIRUT, Feb 1, (Agencies): Syria's Kurdish militia is growing frustrated with its patron, the United States, and is pressing it to do more to stop Turkey's assault on a key stronghold in Syria.

The issue reflects a deeper concern among the Kurds over their alliance with the Americans, which proved vital to defeating the Islamic State group in Syria. The Kurds fear that ultimately they and their dream of self-rule will be the losers in the big powers' play over influence in Syria. Already the US is in a tough spot, juggling between the interests of the Kurds, its only ally in war-torn Syria,

and its relations with Turkey, a key NATO ally.

The Kurdish militia views

defending the Kurdish enclave of Afrin as an existential fight to preserve their territory. Afrin has major significance — it's

one of the first Kurdish ar-

eas to rise up against President

Bashar Assad and back self-

rule, a base for senior fighters who pioneered the alliance

with the Americans and a key

link in their efforts to form a

contiguous entity along Tur-

key's border. The offensive,

which began Jan 20, has so far

killed more than 60 civilians

and dozens of fighters on both

sides, and displaced thousands.

watch?" Aldar Khalil, a senior

Kurdish politician said of the US-led coalition against IS. "They should meet their obli-

gations toward this force that

participated with them (in the fight against terrorism.) We

consider their unclear and inde-

cisive positions as a source of

Khalil, one of the architects of the Kurds' self-adminis-

tration, and three other senior

Kurdish officials told The As-

sociated Press that they have

conveyed their frustration over

what they consider a lack of de-

cisive action to stop the Afrin

assault to US and other West-

ern officials. They said US of-

ficials have made confusing

statements in public. One of the

officials who agreed to discuss

private meetings on condition

of anonymity said some US

comments even amounted to

The fight for Afrin puts

Washington in a bind with

few good options. The Ameri-

cans have little leverage and

no troops in Afrin, which is

located in a pocket of Kurdish

control at the western edge of

Syria's border with Turkey

and is cut off from the rest

of Kurdish-held territory by a Turkish-held enclave. The

area is also crowded with other

players. Russian troops were

based there to prevent friction

with Turkey until they with-

drew ahead of the offensive,

and the area — home to more

Continued on Page 8

tacit support for the assault.

concern.'

"How can they stand by and

PARIS: France will start euro-denominated credits to Iranian buyers of its goods later this year, a move to bolster trade while keeping it outside the reach of US sanctions, the head of state-owned investment bank Bpifrance said

Newswatch

France and other European countries have been looking to increase trade with Iran since Paris, **Washington** and other world powers agreed in 2015 to lift many economic sanctions in exchange for controls on Iran's nuclear programme. (RTRS)

UNITED NATIONS: Russia's

UN ambassador said Wednesday the United States has not made a case for new Security Council action against Iran with parts of missiles the Trump administration claims were supplied by **Tehran** to **Yemen**'s Houthi rebels.

Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said in comments released by Russia's UN Mission that it was unclear whether missile parts that council members were taken to see in Washington on Monday were Iranian or violated a 2015 arms embargo on

Yemen. The Trump administration maintains that fragments from missiles recovered in Saudi Arabia after being launched from Yemen by the Houthis contain markings proving they were Iranianmade, though some security experts have questioned whether the evidence is foolproof.

Nebenzia said Iran "is vehemently denying it is supplying anything to Yemen.

Continued on Page 8

U\$\$/KD 0.29955/65

Euro/KD 0.3739

British £/KD 0.4266

Yen/KD 0.0027

See Page 29

▲ **DOW** +131.76 pts at 21:20 Feb 1 See Page 30

▲ Nasdaq +24.48 pts at 21:20 Feb 1

FTSE -43.16 pts at closing Feb 1

▲ Nikkei +387.82 pts at closing Feb 1

Gold \$1,341.35 per oz (London) NYMEX crude \$65.47 pb

Brent crude \$69.43 pb

3-month \$ LIBOR rate 1.7777%

PHILIPPINES AMBASSADOR DENIES CRISIS We can solve this: Envoy

Hope for extension of amnesty period

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Ambassador of the Philippines to Kuwait HE Renato Pedro O. Villa denied the existence of a diplomatic crisis between the Philippines and Kuwait following the issuance of statements by the President of the **Philippines Rodrigo Duterte concerning** the conditions of the Filipino community in Kuwait, and the decision taken by the Philippines' Ministry of Labor to suspend sending workers to Kuwait until it is informed about the reasons behind the death of seven Filipino expatriates in December 2017, reports Al-Anba daily.

The ambassador clarified that this matter is a solvable problem and the two countries will be able to find suitable solutions in light of the friendly relations between Kuwait and the Philippines, indicating that the President followed up the issue via social media.

He explained that three of the Filipinos had committed suicide and two died due to bad ventilation in the living room. Also, a Filipino expatriate had killed a female compatriot out of jealousy and he later died while fleeing from the site of the crime when he either jumped or fell from the seventh floor of the building.

Ambassador O. Villa revealed he asked Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Consul Affairs Ambassador Sami Al-Hamad for a copy of the investigations report on the seven death cases during a meeting held after he was summoned to the ministry.

He praised the statements issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to clarify that Kuwait has no intention to cancel the residence permits of Filipino expatriates, and affirm the continuity of friendly relations between Kuwait and the Philippines.

The ambassador expressed happiness for the amnesty period declared by Ministry of Interior for residency law violators to either leave the country without paying fines or amend their legal status.

He explained that there are around 10,000 Filipino violators of residency law including 7,000 employees of the private sector. Among them, 500 are not willing to amend their status and prefer to leave Kuwait. About 2,000 of the total Filipino violators of residency law want to make use of the amnesty period to

Continued on Page 8



A view of Kuwait City during the early evening through Shaheed Park — Saleh Taqi-KUNA

Coalition bids to end Aden standoff

Uncertainty hangs over business community

Doubt clouds Prince Alwaleed return

RIYADH, Feb 1, (RTRS): Saudi Arabian billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal is back on the job as chairman of global investment firm Kingdom Holding after being released from detention in an anti-corruption campaign, the company said on

Prince Alwaleed, one of the country's top international investors, was freed on Saturday, nearly three months after being taken into custody along with dozens of senior officials and businessmen on the orders of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Most detainees have been released, after settlements secured just over \$100 billion from members of the elite, the attorney general has said, without providing details.

In his first interview since being detained, conducted hours before his release, Prince Alwaleed told Reuters he maintained his innocence and expected to keep full control of his firm.

A senior Saudi official would not confirm that claim but said any settlements included an admis-

In the absence of more information, speculation has run rampant about whether Prince Alwaleed secured his freedom by handing over part of his fortune — previously estimated by Forbes magazine at \$17 billion — or stood up to the authorities and won.

He and other tycoons face a challenge to get back into the swing of running their financial empires in the uncertainty hanging over the business community since their detention.

Their ability to do so could make it harder for Saudi Arabia to attract foreign investors to big projects, an important part of Crown Prince Mohammed's grand vision to transform the kingdom

Continued on Page 8

Photo by Rizalde Cayanan - courtesy of DAI

ADEN, Feb 1, (AFP): Saudi and Emirati envoys shuttled between Yemeni government forces and besieging southern separatists in second city Aden on Thursday in a bid to end a tense standoff after days of deadly infighting.

The Sunday assault on the embattled government's head-

quarters by its former allies has opened up a new front in the devastating civil war that has created what the United Nations says is the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

jor contributors to a military coalition that has backed President Abad Rabbo Mansour Hadi since he fled into exile in 2015.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are the two ma-

But they have struggled to keep together the disparate alliance supporting him against Huthi Shiite rebels who control the capital Sanaa and much of the north.

South Yemen was an independent country until union with the north in 1990 and Hadi has relied heavily on militia that support its restoration.

Many of them have been recruited into special forces units trained by the UAE to fight al-Qaeda, which has a large presence in parts of the south.

Clashes

On Wednesday, those forces deployed across Aden bringing a lull in the deadly clashes that had forced a halt to the distribution of desperately needed relief supplies for days.

The separatists said they were in full control of Aden on Thursday.

"The security situation is stable and we are working with the coalition to consolidate it," a separatist official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Yemen Airways said it had resumed flights from Aden airport with a service to Cairo on Thursday.

Only the presidential palace in the north of the city remains under the control of government forces, military sources said.

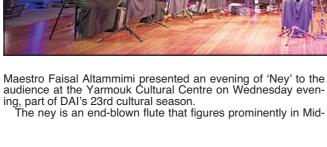
Saudi Arabia and the UAE have not abandoned their support for Hadi, who lives in exile in Riyadh, but they have singularly failed to intervene militarily in support of Prime Minister Ahmed bin Dagher and other ministers who are holed up under siege in the palace.

The two governments' envoys "met with all concerned parties, stressing the need to abide by the ceasefire ... and refocus efforts on the front lines against the Houthis", the UAE's of-

ficial WAM news agency reported. "The situation in Aden is stable and all parties have complied completely with the communique issued by the Arab coalition," Major General Mohammed bin Saeed al-Mughaidi of

Saudi Arabia told reporters in Aden. "The kingdom and the United Arab Emirate have a common

Continued on Page 8



ing, part of DAI's 23rd cultural season.

The ney is an end-blown flute that figures prominently in Mid-

dle Eastern music. In some of these musical traditions, it is the only wind instrument used. The ney has been played continuously for 4,500-5,000 years, making it one of the oldest musical instruments still in use.









KUNA photos

Photos from the massive turnout for flag-hoisting ceremony

Minister hails unity ahead of national celebrations

Kuwait's Minister of Information Mohammad Al-Jabri said Thursday that the massive turnout for a flaghoisting ceremony was a show of strength and a pledge of allegiance in an explicit message to the world. The lavish ceremony held at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad cultural Center, sponsored by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, ushered in Kuwait's national celebrations and brought together Kuwaitis representing all walks of

The celebrations are a chance

to commemorate the history of this nation and remember the sacrifices of our forefathers, Al-Jabri told the press after the ceremony was over.

Al-Jabri, who heads an ad hoc committee in charge of national celebrations, pointed out that the gaieties of such occasions help whip up patriotic fervor as Kuwaitis look forward to a brighter and more prosperous future.

The Kuwaiti minister said this year's national celebrations carry the mantra of, "Wise Leader, Loyal Nation", proving that the country

would always remain a bastion of democracy, liberty and security.

He revealed that a myriad of exciting activities await Kuwaitis nationwide during national celebrations, as their country observes its 57th Independence Day and 27th Liberation Day, in addition to the

12th anniversary of the ascendency His Highness the Amir.

Dishing out advice to Kuwaiti youth, Al-Jabri urged them to "stand united for the good of the nation," handing His Highness the Prime Minister a commemorative gift to close out the ceremony.

PAM no longer dependent on state budget, says Al-Shihab

Almost 98 pc of people in Kuwait use Internet

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Revenues of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) in the 2017/2018 fiscal year exceeded KD 54 million, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press release, the Vice-Director for Human Resources and Financial Affairs at the authority Eng Khuloud Al-Shihab explained that the authority collected fees worth KD 54,638,324 for completion of transactions since April 1, 2017. The authority is no longer dependant on the state budget, as it has become a source of income for the state.

She revealed that there are charges for making any correction to work per-

mits, adding that, "In case the error occurred due to the mistake of the employees of the authority, the charges will be refunded in accordance with the specified procedures".

Eng Al-Shihab indicated the dire need to establish an automated electronic interface with Egypt in order to rectify the labor market and tackle the demographic misbalance in Kuwait.

She explained that the process of establishing the interface is ongoing smoothly. The second stage has already finished with the training of the employees of Ministry of Manpower in Egypt and installing necessary systems there. They are now waiting to input the data of Egyptian laborers

who are seeking to work in Kuwait in order to test the system and then launch the third and final stage.

and final stage.

In addition, Eng Al-Shihab indicated about agreements in the near future for the approval of the professional skills measures at the official body for professional accreditation in India in order to identify the skill levels required from Indian laborers who are seeking to work

in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, almost 98 percent of the population in Kuwait, including citizens and expatriates, use the Internet, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to the annual report issued by Hootsuite Company, which is specialized in social media management, 4,100,000 people in Kuwait use the Internet, and 3.1 million people (about 74 percent of the total population) use

mobile phones.

The number of active mobile SIM cards in the country is 7.4 million, which is 178 percent of the total population.

The number of Internet users increased by 23 percent compared to January 2017. The number of active SIM cards has reduced by about five percent. More than four million people in Kuwait use Facebook.

The number of individuals who use social media has increased by 37 percent. Among them, 32 percent are women and 68 percent are men.

The number of Instagram users in Kuwait is 1.6 million, which is 38 percent of the total population. The rate of female users of Instagram is 38 percent and the rate of male users is 62 percent.

Furthermore, the Interior Ministry issued a decision on the termination of several expatriate employees as part of the replacement plan that the Civil Service Commission (CSC) has requested from all ministries, reports Al-Shahid daily quoting sources.

Sources disclosed the decision covers expatriate professionals and ordinary employees assigned at the borders.

Sources said the ministry will evaluate the appointment files of its expatriate staff and it is expected to prepare another list of expatriates for termination.



Photo from the lavish ceremony

Al-Afasi holds meet to assess situation

Info to pay bonuses to staff who covered GCC summit

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Ministry of Information has affirmed that it will pay rewarding bonuses to employees who covered the GCC summit and the Arabian Gulf Cup competition that were recently held in Kuwait, reports Aljarida daily quoting informed sources.

They indicated that the payments can be expected to reach the bank accounts of the deserving employees by end of February

The sources revealed that the concerned authorities of the ministry have completed preparing the names of the deserving employees, technicians, and engineers who worked tirelessly to cover the two events, adding that the list will be referred to the Finance Department for the payment of the bonus allocated to each employee based on classification.

They said Minister of Information Mohammed Al-Jabri stressed the need to grant financial rewards to all employees who sincerely worked in covering the two events which were great successes. Meanwhile, Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr Fahad Al-Afasi held meetings with senior officials of the two ministries last week to assess the present situation of concerned sectors, and discussed possible solutions to shortcomings, reports Al-Qabas daily. The daily quoting a source said the

minister has directed officials to prepare

separate comprehensive memos contain-

ing short and long term solutions, includ-

ing weak and strong points identified in the course of appraisal.

The minister stated his intention to apply the slogan "rights must be given to whom it is due". He assured senior officials and directors will not be reshuffled until their rate of performance is evaluated. He reaffirmed the need to keep the door open for everybody, indicating

employees and citizens.

He urged the officials to avoid injustice and do away with nepotism in the area of promotion so that all employees will be given equal opportunities in the effort to deter disputes in the two ministries.

nobody should ignore complaints from

News in Brief

MoE to adopt new rules:

Education Ministry Undersecretary Dr Haitham Al-Athari said the ministry will soon adopt the new conditions set by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) for supervisory jobs, reports Al-Anba daily.

The undersecretary explained this is in preparation for the announcement of supervisory vacancies in accordance with the new conditions, especially in the Coordination and Private Education departments.

'Aluminium foil safe': Health Awareness and Nutrition Department of Public Authority for Food and Nutrition affirmed that it is safe to use

reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement issued by the department, it recommended not storing food in aluminum containers for a long period and to use glass con-

aluminum foil for preserving food,

tainers instead.

It also recommended not using aluminum dishes or aluminum foil to bake food in the oven or to heat food in the microwave oven, indicating that it is

better to use aluminum foil when the food is not hot.

It stated that researches show the use of aluminum is not harmful as long as it does not exceed the specified limits, revealing that a human body produces small amounts of aluminum, which means it is not harmful for the body.

means it is not harmful for the body. As per information released by the World Health Organization (WHO), the safe amount of aluminum for a human body is 40 milligram per day for every kilogram of the body. This means the amount regarded safe for a person who weighs 60 kilograms is 2,400 milligrams per day.

Budget not to go KD 365m: The

increase in the estimated budgets for fiscal 2017/2018 and the next fiscal year will not exceed KD 365 million, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

Sources disclosed the estimated bud-

get for the current fiscal year increased by KD 10.86 million, indicating the salary and other items in the next budget will most likely increase by KD 11.23 million. This means the rate of increase is only 3.4 percent, sources added.



KUNA pr Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with the visiting Ukrainian counterpart, Sergiy Kyslytsya.

Kuwait, Ukraine discuss bilateral relations

Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met on Thursday with the visiting Ukrainian counterpart, Sergiy Kyslytsya, discussing bilateral relations and regional and international issues.

The session was part of scheduled political consultations between the State of Kuwait and the Ukrainian Republic, first session of which was held in Kiev in November 2016.

The deputy foreign minister held a luncheon in honor of the Ukrainian official, attended by Kuwaiti officials and members of the Ukrainian delegation accompanying Kyslyt-

MEW to focus on 2040 strategy to fulfill Amir's vision

Need to streamline expenses: Bu Shehri

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Muhammad Bu Shehri, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) and head of the interim committee formed to manage Municipal Council tasks, stated the ministry spends roughly KD 3 billion on electricity and water, affirming the need to streamline expenses in that concern, reports Al-Kuwaitiya daily.

Bu Shehri added the ministry managed to save about 120 mil-

lion dinars through rationalization of expenditure, and that the ministry will focus on its 2040 strategy to fulfill the vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to transform Kuwait to an international financial and commercial hub.

He also commended the vision of HH the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense to develop the economy through the Silk Road, the islands and other

development projects aimed at generating alternative sources of income.

He disclosed the ministry has

22,000 employees of which about 90 percent are Kuwaitis and occupying positions in different sectors. He reiterated the committee he chairs has accomplished 150 files within 100 days, and the priority is for official development projects although private sector projects are also considered.

Winners, participants and some of the officials pose for a group photo

KUNA photos



Iraqi Widad A-Fayad wins the International Exhibition of Inventions Geneva award.

'Chances for some dust in open areas'

Weather to be moderate: Al-Qarawi

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1, (KUNA): Kuwait's weather currently stable due to the impact of high air altitude with northwesterly winds which will lead to dust on some open areas, said Abdul Aziz Al-Qarawi, the weather forecaster at Kuwait Meteorological Center (KMC).

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Oarawi Said Thursday weather was moderate, the wind speed was between 8 to 30 kilometers per hour (km/h) and the maximum temperature was between 19 and 21 degrees Celsius.

On Friday, Al-Qarawi said the weather

Praver Timings

will be moderate with northeasterly winds between 14 to 42 kilometers per hour, with a chance for some dust in open areas, the maximum temperature will be between 20 to 22 degrees Ĉelsius, and minimum will be between 5 to 7 degrees.

On Saturday, the same weather expected with northwesterly winds with speed between 10 to 40 kilometers per hour, the highest temperature will be from 21 to 31 while the lowest from 5 to 7 degrees Celsius with chances for some clouds during the night.

Kuwait Today

	rray	er II	IIIIIyS	
Fajr				05:16
Sunrise				
Zohr				12:02
Asr				
Maghrib				
Isha				18:45
	W	eath	01	
Expected we By Night: Co to moderate nor 08-32 km/h. By Day: Fair	eather old with th wes	for the light sterly	ne next 24 variable v wind, with	vind to light speed of
moderate north km/h.				
Station			Max	Min
Station			Exp	Rec
Kuwait City			21	11
			20	03
Kuwait Airport				
Abdaly			20	05
Bubyan			19	
Jahra			21	07
Failaka Island			18	08
Salmiyah			18	13
Ahmadi			18	12
Nuwaisib			20	07
Wafra			21	04
Salmy			19	06
4 day	s for	ecas	t - Weat eb 2	her
	Fric	ıay, ⊦	eb 2	
Expected weath	er			Fair
Max Temp				
Min Temp				
Wind Direction.				NVV
Wind Speed				.15-40 KM/N
			Feb 3	
Expected weath	er			air
Max Temp				21C
Min Temp				
Wind Direction.				
Wind Speed				.10-35 km/h
		day, I		
Expected weath will appear	er Fair	and:	some scat	tered clouds
Max Temp				21C
Min Temp				
Wind Direction.				NW-VRB
Wind Speed				
ma opocanii			Feb 5	
Expected weath				tered clouds
will appear	or r an	ana .	borno boat	toroa oloado
Max Temp				200
Min Temp				06C
Wind Direction.				
Wind Speed				
willia opeca				.00 10 111/11
	Marir	ie Foi	recast	
Station	Max	Min	Sea	Today's
	Exp	Rec	Surf	Waves
				Ht Direction

South Dolphin

Umm Mudayrah Beacon M28

Sea Island Buoy

Beacon N6 Qaruh Island

4 days forecast - Marine Friday, Feb 2 Expected weather

Sea state

Max Temp.

Min Temp

2nd low tide

Total Rainfall in 24 hrs

Wind Direction

.. Slight to moderate rough at times

WIND DIRECTION	INV
Wind Speed	15-40 km/ł
Saturday, Feb 3	3
Expected weather	Fai
Sea stateS	light to moderate
Wave height	2-5 f
Max Temp	210
Min Temp	050
Wind Direction	NV
Wind Speed	
Sunday, Feb 4	
Expected weather. Fair and some	scattered clouds
will appear	
Sea stateS	
Wave height	
Max Temp	
Min Temp	
Wind Direction	
Wind Speed	
Monday, Feb 5	
Expected weather. Fair and some	scattered clouds
will appear	
Sea state	
Wave height	
Max Temp	200

Tide times at Shuwaikh Port 1st high tide: 2nd high tide 1st low tide: .

.VRB

.08-18 km/h

Sunset:	
Recorded yesterday	at Kuwait
Airport	
Max temp	19C
Min temp	03C
Max Rh	
Min Rh	23%

Recorded yesterday at South

voipnin	
Min/Max/ Air Temp	11/17C
Min/Max Rel Hum	32/67%
Wind Direction/Wind Speed	N/26 km/h
Prev Wave Dir/Max Wave Ht	N/-ft
Min/Max Sea Surface Temp	/- C
Sea Current	Upwelling
Directorate General of Meteo	Civil Aviation, rological Dept.
INICICU	nological Dept.

SE SE SE SE SE

3ft 3ft 3ft 3ft 3ft

Mohammad Ajran Thewaihi Al Hajri, 20 years old, buried on Thursday. Condolences: At the cemetery only, Tel: 99365924. Ali Nasseer Qombor Jafar, 73 years old, buried on Thursday. Condolences: (Men) Maidan Hawally, Al Huseiniya Al Ashkinaniya, Tel: 99625871 (Women) Bneid Al Gar, Huseinyat Sayed Ali Al Musawi, Tel: 99797582; Shaikha Ibrahim Abdullah Al Sharekh, Al Gar, Huseinyat Sayed Ali Al Musawi, 1el: 99/9/582; Shaikha Ibranim Abdullah Al Sharekh, 75 years old, buried on Thursday. Condolences: (Men) Hiteen, Diwan Al Sharekh, Block 4, Street 15, House 89, Tel: 97175577 (Women) Qortuba, Block 4, Street 1, House 75; Amina Abdullah Husein Al Aradi, 67 years old, wife of Sayed Jawad Fakher Al Khabaaz Al Qalaf, buried on Thursday. Condolences: (Men) Dairya, Bahrana Mosque, Tel: 65566558 (Women) Shuhada, Block 4, Street 412, House 36; Saud Mohammad Yusef Al Nasser Allah, 74 years old, buried on Thursday. Condolences: (Men) Dahiyat Abdullah Al Salem, Diwan Al Nasser Allah, Tel: 22560810 (Women) Qortuba, Block 2, Street 2, House 33, Tel: 99016600; Safak Ghaleb Ghalaab Bin Bessaiss Al Musaria; 75 years old, buried on Thursday. Condolences: (Men) Abdullah Al Muharak Bessaiss Al Mutairi, 75 years old, buried on Thursday. Condolences: (Men) Abdullah Al Mubarak Block 9, Street 14, House 67, Tel: 55066000 (Women) Rehab, Block 1, Street 12, House 31.

Feb 1, 2018

Yemen's Al-Noubi claims \$15,000 **Int'l Invention Fair prize in Kuwait**

Kuwaiti Ahmad Nabil takes home IFIA award

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1, (KUNA): Khaled Al-Noubi of Yemen clinched the 10th **International Invention** Fair in the Middle East **Grand Prize in Kuwait** on Wednesday for his virtual reality smart glasses, which translate visuals into descriptive spoken word.

Al-Noubi, who took home \$15,000 in prize money, hailed the event, held under the auspices of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, as one of the most significant internationally.

In comments to the press, the triumphant innovator expressed hope the inventions he had witnessed at the exhibition would be transformed into products that serve mankind.

Russian David Arnovitch won the Kuwait Science Club prize worth \$10,000, while Kuwaiti Ahmad Nabil took home the International of Federation Inventors

Associations (IFIA) award. The Kuwaiti surgeon's endoscopy project has already reached international fame, and is used throughout surgeries worldwide.

Other winners and their awards on the night included Widad (International Exhibition of Inventions Geneva) and Qatari's Mohammad Al-Jufairi (Gulf Cooperation Council Patent Office).

Representing His Highness the Amir, Minister of Education and Higher Education Hamed Al-Azmi said the Amir's support of the event stems from Kuwait's commitment to scientific research, innovation and human investment, stressing their importance as building blocks in the nation's development.

For his part, the event's chief organiser and Kuwait Science Club chairman Talal Al-Kharafi hailed the inventors as a source of pride and development for their home countries.

Organised by the Kuwait Science Club in collaboration the Geneva-based with International Exhibition of Inventions, the five-day exhibition hosted 130 inventors from 39 countries.

Kuwaiti 'families' adopt 600 orphans

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Kuwaiti families have adopted 600 orphans and the adoption process has become easier, reports Al-Rai daily quoting Ministry of Social Affairs Undersecretary Saad Al-Kharaz.

Speaking to reporters when he patronized the national days celebration of the Welfare Home recently, Al-Kharaz revealed the Elderly Welfare Home expansion project will be completed soon. He said the development plan of the ministry includes the construction of two centers for the elderly in Ishbiliya and Hawally.

He added the new Juvenile Welfare Department building in Sulaibiya will be completed within three years and it will be located in an area measuring 30,000 square meters.



Khaled Al-Noubi of Yemen wins the grand prize of the fair worth \$15,000 for his virtual reality smart glasses



Qatar's Mohammad Al-Jufairi wins the Gulf Cooperation Council Patent Office award.



Event's chief organizer and Kuwait Science Club Chairman Talal Al-Kharafi.



Representing HH the Amir, Minister of Education and Higher Education Hamed Al-Azmi during the ceremo-

Dr Al-Refa'e opens recycling project in Khaldiya Campus

KU to take delivery of 5 colleges in Al-Shadadiya

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Kuwait University Secretary General Dr Mathna Al-Refa'e announced that the university will take delivery of five colleges within the Sabah Al-Salem City (Al-Shadadiya) University project, and the premises of several other colleges will be ready next year, reports Al-Qabas

Dr Al-Refa'e disclosed this at the inauguration of the recycling project in Khaldiya Campus organized by the university's General Services

Department recently. He assured the university is determined to complete the project within the scheduled period, noting the remaining buildings and other facilities will see the light of day

He affirmed the university's higher authority makes it a priority to provide whatever is required to facilitate execution of the project. He reiterated significance of the project cannot be underestimated as a gigantic project that includes colleges, administrative buildings, and necessary infrastructure.

MoE initials KD 927,000 worth deal to supply, instal computers

Change in some academic timetables surprises students

opened

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Ministry of Education has signed a threeyear contract worth KD **927,000** for the supply, installation, operation and maintenance of computers and their accessories in schools, reports Aljarida daily.

Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Buildings and Planning Dr Khalid Al-Rashid said the contract is aimed at meeting the demands of all new schools

edition Be Mine Collection.

Jewellery Superbrand Joyalukkas continues to capture

hearts all over the globe with a million world-class

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and rings with unique heart designs in the limited

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Chairman & MD. "But this exclusive collection for

Valentine's Day 2018 is truly extraordinary. We are

sure the shoppers would fall in love with these unique

designs and enjoy them as gifts for their loved ones



Al-Rashid

2018/2019 academic year as well as meeting the needs of the current schools. He revealed

networking devices in addition to Meanwhile, Al-Rai daily reported that Ministry of Education has floated

Joyalukkas offers limited edition

Be Mine diamond jewellery collection

to celebrate Valentine's Day

that the contract also includes supply

of monitors, printers, scanners, and

a tender for the maintenance of computer networks in Capital and Hawally educational zones

Dr Al-Rashid indicated that it is uncertain whether the existing devices and spare parts are original or not, adding that the company that supplied them did not meet the requirements of the tender and was not committed to its conditions, mainly provision of quality certificates issued by the manufacturing company, and the commitment of the supplying company to provide the required spare parts based on the

terms specified in the tender. He revealed that the Finance Department of the ministry was addressed about this matter for referring

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it to the Central Tenders Committee based on a request from the State Audit Bureau

Also, Ministry of Education has asked the Central Tenders Committee to approve the extension of the contract for operation and maintenance of the servers in the headquarters of the ministry and relevant sites for one more year starting from Jan 21 at a total cost of KD 281,000.

Meanwhile, Several students were surprised to find their academic timetables changed in some academic departments at Kuwait University after professors who were supposed to teach certain courses were changed in the online system, reports Al-Qabas

Investments said being promoted

KUWAIT, Feb 1, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said Wednesday that the Foreign Ministry seeks to promote Kuwaiti economic diplomacy that contributes to local economy and serves the State's higher interest.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an economic symposium organized by the Kuwait Chamber Commerce and Indus-(KCCI), Al-Jarallah 110 Kuwaiti embassies have a clear-cut and definite agenda aiming at promoting Kuwaiti investments around the globe.

He added that economic diplomacy, established by His Highness the Amir, is doing a significant role in the promotion of Kuwait's overseas investments.





KUNA photos Top: Sheikh Ahmad Meshaal watching the video presentation, and (above), taking a tour of the project.

Sheikh Ahmad examines hospital project

Head of the Government Performance Follow-Up Apparatus Sheikh Ahmad Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah visited on Thursday construction site of Al-Farwaniya Hospital expansion project.

At the site, he was briefed about proceedings of the work, the apparatus said in a statement.

Sheikh Ahmad ordered speedy ex-

ecution of the venture. (KUNA)



Nawal Al-Kuwaitiyya and Ahlam.

Actor Bahman admitted in hospital

Singer Nawal expresses shock over being expelled from 'Voice'

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Singer Nawal Al-shown in Ramadan, reports Al-Jarida daily. Kuwaitiyya expressed shock over being expelled from the show "The Voice" to be broadcast on MBC channel and replaced by the Emirati singer Ahlam based on the decision of the channel management, reports Al-Sevassah daily.

On her Twitter account, she explained that she received the invitation from the top management of MBC channel to participate in the program as a judge and she had accepted the invitation. A team was sent to explain to her the method of recording. Considering that all this had happened, she was shocked by the sudden decision to exclude her from the judging panel due to unknown reasons.

She said such behavior indicated the management's unprofessionalism in dealing with

Meanwhile, actor Abdullah Bahman has been admitted in Adan Hospital when he collapsed suddenly in extreme pain inside his

house on Monday, reports Al-Rai daily.

He explained that he fell on the ground and could not move because of the pain, and he was taken to Adan Hospital where initial tests revealed infection with severe inflammation. Further tests will be conducted whereby he will undergo endoscopy and colonoscopy in order to determine the reasons behind the in-

flammation. Actor Mohamad Jaber Al-Aderousi is preparing for the filming of his new drama, "Ma Hesa Qalam" (With Hesa Pen), which will be

The drama's cast consists of Hayat Al-Fahad, Zahra Al-Kharji, Basim Abdulamir, Yacoub Abdullah, Mishari Al-Balaam, Hussain Al-Mahdi, Nour Al-Ghandour, Fouz Al-

Shatti, Abdullah Al-Tulaihi, Retag Al-Ali and

Shahd Al-Kandari among others.
Al-Aderousi expressed happiness over the new opportunity to work with actress Hayat Al-Fahad (Om Suzan).

Actress Gour is busy filming her new drama, 'Akher Al-Shittah' (Last Winter), reports Al-Rai daily. The drama is directed by actor Faisal Al-

Omairi while Faisal Dashti wrote the script.

The cast includes Mohammed Safar, Hamad Ashkanani, Mohammad Al-Baloushi, Fahad Al-Saleh and others.

Due to the success of the last two seasons of 'Hamad Show,' host of the program and social media activist Hamad Al-Ali, who is also known as 'Hamad Oalam', is now preparing for the launching of the third season of the show which will be aired on Al-Rai TV, reports Al-Rai daily.

The talk show is unique and it is the first of its kind in the country.

A production company based in the United Arab Emirates has reached an agreement with Nawal Al-Kuwaitiyya to perform in a concert scheduled for March in Sharjah, along with singer Abadi Al-Jowhar who is popularly known as 'Octopus of Oud', reports Al-Anba

News in Brief

Jarallah meets Macron's envoy:

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalid Sulaiman Al-Jarallah met on Wednesday with the envoy of French President Pierre Dokan, who is visiting the country along with his accompanying delegation.

During the meeting, the envoy delivered a written message addressed to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from the French President Emmanuel Macron, including an invitation to His Highness to attend a conference in support of Lebanon scheduled for early

During the meeting, the two men discussed bilateral relations between the two countries as well as the developments on the regional and international arenas.

The meeting was attended by a number of foreign ministry senior officials and Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the French Republic to the State of Kuwait. (KUNA).

Request approved: Islamic Studies Department Director Marzouq Al-Hait has confirmed approval of the request to open eight Quran recitation centers, reports Al-

Al-Hait revealed these centers will be located in the new districts, indicating there will be morning and evening centers for

Anba daily.

men and women. Asked about the curriculum development, Al-Hait said the department found that the curriculum presented by the Supreme Committee headed by Awqaf Ministry Undersecretary Eng Fareed Emadi is in line with the moderate orientation.

KNA choses Dr Al-Sayer: Kuwait Neurosurgeons Association (KNA) has chosen

Dr Faisal Al-Sayer as its chairperson with Dr Aliaa Askar as his deputy and Dr Mishal Al-Moula as treasurer, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Al-Sayer affirmed the association will

contribute to activating the role of Kuwait in Gulf, Asian and world organizations; while focusing on enhancing the scientific skills of its members by holding conferences and workshops in addition to following up the latest developments in the bid to improve medical services.

Al-Sayer has also been elected as Deputy Chairperson of the Gulf Neurosurgeons Association.



Amir's wisdom hailed: Security expert in Crisis and Disaster Management Major General Yousef Al-Mullah has disclosed that Kuwait could be affected by wars that occur in neighboring countries because of its geographical position, but the wisdom of His Highness the Amir has always taken the nation to safety, reports Al-Shahed



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NBK Children's Hospital to start stem cell implantation

Committee finalises report on Health Ministry irregularities

the committee formed for investigating the irregularities in Ministry of Health MP Saadoun Hammad said the committee, which recently finalized its report, has extended its work for a year to monitor and follow-up the implementation of its recommendations and resolutions, reports Al-Rai daily.

He stressed that the recommendations which the committee will follow up include the government's contract with an international consultancy firm to track down the funds that were transferred from the health office in Germany to a brokerage company that is outside Germany.

MP Hammad revealed that the assignment of an international consultancy firm to track down the lost funds from the health office to an outside brokerage company is now under the custody of Minister of Health Dr Bassel Al-Sabah.

He affirmed that the committee this vear will follow up the level of the government's commitment to the committee's recommendations and resolu-

Director of NBK Children's Hospital Dr Maitham Hussein has announced

that the hospital will start conducting stem cell transplantation surgeries in October, reports Al-Anba daily.

Speaking to the daily, Hussein disclosed the robot in the Stem Cell Unit of the hospital is being programmed in preparation for the operation and to link it with the control machine of the patients.

He added the hospital is also preparing for the first conference on ideal health practices. He affirmed the hospital's vision is in line with that of Health Ministry Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah, while unveiling a plan to upgrade the intensive care and emergency units.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has fulfilled all the conditions for the announcement of a new batch of nominees to work in the governmental sector, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources. Sources confirmed the CSC was informed about the manpower needs of various governmental bodies 55 days after the 61st governmental employment and 40 days after closing the registration door.

Sources said the registration period for the 62nd governmental employment will start in March.



Deputy Prime Minister Anas Al-Saleh with World Bank's Robert Beschel.



Deputy PM Anas Al-Saleh meets with French Ambassador to Kuwait Marie Masdupuy.

Deputy PM receives WB. French officials

Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh met Thursday World Bank Public Sector Governance specialist Robert Beschel discussing bilateral relations between Kuwait and the World Bank.

Meanwhile, Minister Al-Saleh also received French Ambassador to Kuwait, Marie Masdupuy, where they reviewed the "outstanding" bilateral relations between the Kuwait and France, a statement by the Minister's office said.

The two sides also tackled a number of issues of mutual concern, especially activating bilateral cooperation and enhancing relations between the two countries in all fields as well as supporting the Kuwaiti-French friendship ties. (KUNA)

30 farm owners to get compensation

Committee formed to study files of martyrs' relatives

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Shiekh Khalid Al-Jarrah has formed a committee tasked to study files of martyrs' relatives as a prelude to granting them citizenship, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

Sources said Assistant Undersecretary for Citizenship and Passports Affairs Major General Mazen Al-Jarrah heads the committee and Citizenship Department Director Muhammad Bu Shaibah serves as rapporteur.

Sources disclosed the committee will announce its work mechanism soon and inform the martyrs' relatives about the required documents, indicating the committee will start receiving the concerned individuals in the coming days.

Sources pointed out this step reflects the keenness of the minister to protect rights and grant citizenship to those who deserve it while putting State's interests on top of the list of priorities.

The Ministry of Finance, Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) and Kuwait Municipality are waiting for the Cabinet to approve the proposal to compensate the owners of agricultural plots along the railway project in Wafra Agricultural Area, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources revealed 30 farms are covered by the compensation proposal, pointing out the compensation could be material or alternative plots which are far from the railway project.

Sources said the total compensation for the owners of these farms will most likely reach millions of Kuwaiti dinars, clarifying the value will be determined based on the size and location of the farm.

Sources added the tripartite committee will remove agricultural plots along the railway site in response to the request of the Public Authority for Roads in preparation for the implementation of the project.

News in Brief

Labor Vision List wins: The Labor Vision List won in the election of Kuwait Oil Company Workers Union with 2,016 votes, reports Al-Anba daily.

The election was held earlier this week and a total of 5,740 members cast their

AOU holds seminar: The Student Council of Arab Open University (AOU) held a seminar to encourage communication between the administration and the students in order to solve the challenges faced by the students, reports Aljarida

Speaking in the seminar was MP Ali Al-Deqbasi, who affirmed the lack of any personal issues with the university's administration but stressing on the need to address the academic and administrational challenges which the students are currently facing.

He clarified that some challenges like imposing new academic fees, lack of required academic majors, disregard for reasonable excuses and many other problems facing the students such as lack of access to some government jobs for university graduates need to be addressed

Al-Deqbasi indicated that the AOU had succeeded as an idea during its inception and proved its existence in Kuwait after years of its operation, but the current administration needs to open channels of discussion with its students concerning the challenges and difficulties they face in order to reach a common ground that is suitable for all concerned parties.

He vowed, in his capacity as a representative of people, to fulfill his parliamentary role by communicating with the Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi concerning the issues and problems faced by the university students. The MP urged the university administration to properly impose the principle of equality among the students, accept the reasonable excuses especially regarding their absence, exams and other issues, facilitate the opening of available academic sections in every semester, and introduce new majors that are in line with the requirements and needs of the labor market.

In addition, Al-Deqbasi also urged the university to do the necessary in terms of accreditation of certificates, and to enable its graduates to work in various employ-

Al-Roudhan reaffirms his support for **Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, SMEs owners**

Minister plans to increase monthly housing installment to 20 pct

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1, (KUNA): Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan called on Kuwaiti entrepreneurs and owners of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to networks while setting their priorities.

"Youth entrepreneurs and SMEs owners need also to work together as effective economic sector in order to maximize benefit from the government support," he said.

Al-Roudhan, also minister of state for youth affairs, made the comments in an open dialogue with investors on "the government support to the SMEs development" at the central free trade zone on Wednesday. "The role of the government, particularly that of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is clearly set forth in Kuwait Vision 2035; it is based on partnership, innovation and resilience," he said, noting that the ministry has already started carrying out its duties in this regard.

The government has made a good progress in its efforts to involve the largest possible segment of the society in the economic activities and encourage the private sector to play a greater role in the economic development, he pointed out.

The minister added that work is well underway to benefit from previous experiences and amend the act on National Fund for SME Develop-

The Board of Directors of Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) intends to amend the mechanism of deducting the installments for standard and low-cost government houses by increasing them in proportion to the cost of building the houses that has exceeded KD 70,000, reports Al-Qabas daily quoting informed sources. They said the State Minister for Housing Affairs Dr Jinan Boushahri is the one who will decide about increasing the monthly installment to 20 percent of the total monthly income of a citizen, irrespective of whether the latter works in the pub-

receiving pension from Public Institution for Social Security. The sources stressed that the plan of the authority in the current fiscal year seeks to amend the ministerial decision No.31/2001 concerning increasing the monthly installment of standard houses by 10 percent in order to keep up with the cost of houses, which has now exceeded the limit of

lic or private sector or is retired and

Regarding the Kuwait Credit Bank, the sources said the board of the bank intends to change the mechanism for collecting the installments of the mortgages amounting to KD 70,000 disbursed to citizens in order to reduce the period of payment and link it with the monthly salary or pension.

They revealed that Dr. Boushahri recently held meetings with Kuwait Credit Bank's board of directors and they discussed ways to enhance the bank's role in ensuring continuity of disbursements of loans to citizens, especially since PAHW has been and will be distributing housing plots.

Moldova received on Wednesday an official invitation from the State of Kuwait to participate in the 13th meeting of the US-led International Coalition against the so-called Islamic State









He said commitment shown by the university in

that aspect was borne out of its social responsibili-

ties to protect the environment and maintain its nat-

ural stability, while eradicating pollution and deplor-

able environmental situation in their various forms.

He assured the university administration is se-

rious about making its premises environmental

friendly, indicating several activities have been put

KU organises waste recycling campaign

Kuwait University Secretary General Dr Mathna Taleb Al-Refa'e recently inaugurated the university's campaign for waste recycling under the theme "Recycling - Growth" organized by General Services

Dr Al-Refa'e affirmed that Kuwait University has been striving to create a healthy work environment to serve as a model for other institutions in the country, especially in environmental fields.

(IS) due in the Gulf country on Feb

13. Deputy Prime Minister and For-

eign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled

Al-Hamad Al-Sabah addressed the

official invitation to his Moldovan

counterpart, Tudor Ulianovschi, said

Talal Al-Hajri, Kuwaiti Ambassador

to Romania and non-resident envoy

to Moldova, in a statement to Kuwait

the invitation to Moldovan Minister

of State for Bilateral Cooperation Ta-

Ambassador Al-Hajri, who handed

News Agency (KUNA).

in place to achieve the plan. tanya Moloshin, at a meeting at the Moldovan Foreign Ministry building, said he discussed with the Minister of State means of boosting cooperation between the two friendly countries in

The talks also dealt with means of enhancing the 25-year Kuwaiti-Moldovan bilateral relationship.

political, economic and investment

Al-Hajri said he re-expressed the State of Kuwait desire to develop the bilateral ties, adding that his discussions with the Moldovan official dealt with prospected investment in the industrial sector, agriculture, food security. He quoted the Minister of State Moloshin as expressing keenness on upgrading economic cooperation and trade exchanges with the State of Kuwait. The ministerial meeting of the international coalition against the IS (DAESH) will be held on sidelines of the Kuwait International Conference for Iraq Reconstruction and Development (KICIRD), due on Feb 12-14.

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3- Fire Alarm & Security installations and Maintenance Technician, 10 years of Experience is required.

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- 3- Secretary, 5 years of experience in secretary works & Arabic, English typing is required.

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Kuwait's Assembly Speaker Marzouk Al-Ghanim meets IPUScretary-General

Kuwait, IPU in bid to end differences

Speaker to defend reputation

GENEVA, Feb 1, (KUNA); Kuwait's National Assembly **Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim** and his accompanying delegation met Thursday Secretary General of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) Martin Chungong.

"During our meeting with the Secretary-General, we discussed more than one complaint submitted against the Kuwaiti parliament," Al-Ghanim said in a statement following the meeting, noting that he and his host concluded that "unfortunately, someone lied to the people of Kuwait as well as the Inter-Parliamen-

"We defended the Kuwaiti Parliament and its reputation and talked about mechanisms with which we will defend the reputation of our state and its parliament," Al-Ghanim added. Al-Ghanim will hold talks with IPU President Gabriela Cuevas Barron and representative of the Commission on Human

Rights tomorrow (Friday). He will also participate in meetings of the Executive Committee on Saturday and Sunday -- along with representatives of the Arab geopolitical groups.

Speaker Al-Ghanim arrived in Geneva on Wednesday heading a parliamentary delegation to defend image of Kuwait and its parliament against a complaint from the Israeli Knesset, another from a former MP and the third from a current one. The delegation accompanying Al-Ghanim includes lawmakers Rakan Al-Nisf, Ali Al-Deghbasi, Khalil Abul and Allam Al-Kanderi.

The World Union of Arab Bankers (WUAB) on Thursday stressed the key role of the human element in raising the productivity of institutions and improving their per-

WUAB Chairman Joseph Torbe, said in a speech at the opening of the annual human resources forum in Arab financial and banking institutions, in Beirut, that the human element is a nominal component in the productivity of the institution.

He called on human resources management in all institutions to assess their employees to achieve the goals, especially that the world is witnessing rapid changes in technology and communications and trade liberalization.

He also stressed the keenness of WUAB in developing human resources, especially with the increasing movement of migrant workers between institutions according to supply and demand.

For her part, Head of Human Resources Dania Kaakani stressed the role of working women as "a valuable human resource that adds to the society and enriches it", pointing to the important role of the human resources departments towards the female component, which helps the interaction of the labor force women and men and increases the productivity of institutions.

For his part and in statement to KUNA, said Fouad Awad, partner with Meirc Training and Consulting that the Arab Gulf countries are the most interested in managing human resources and they are taking great care and allocating huge budgets to train, prepare and qualify their human cadres.

'Surrender, face courts'

'Shun terrorism, return home'

Center for Moderation Abdullah Al-Sharikah and Water said it will not tolerate any violahas sent a message to the Kuwaiti youth who join radical groups outside the country, especially in Syria and Iraq, reports Al-Anba daily. The daily added, according to the message the director has urged them to quickly abandon their weapons, shun terrorist groups, return to Kuwait and surrender to the authorities and face the impartial judiciary. Al-Sharikah told the Al-Anba daily the message was through the social media. This comes within the efforts of the Center to counter the extremist and deviant ideas.

He pointed out, the Ministry of the Interior as a member of the Higher Committee for Moderation works in coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Director of the No to changes: The Ministry of Electricity tion particularly with respect to the cables or extensions that have been approved according to the plans submitted to the ministry by owners of private or investment houses, reports Al-Anba daily quoting reliable minis-

The sources said serious violations in this regard have come to light where the owner of the plot adds or transfers or modifies the extensions, which endangers the lives of the residents of the building. The sources said if the owner of the plot wishes to make any additions or modification prior approval from the ministry must be approved.

In case of violation, the ministry has the right to cut off the power supply without prior warning and can also take other measures such as transferring the file to the Prosecution, the sources added.





A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Amir great hope for Kuwait's future'

'Rapprochement with Iraq wise move'

"I HAVE actually tried to find a leader and a country similar to Kuwait, in terms of the way of dealing with a neighboring country that had occupied it by force — with tanks and soldiers for seven months and these days this same country (the State of Kuwait) is working to host a conference for the reconstruction of that country (Iraq). Sad to say, I didn't find any country," columnist *Dr Ibrahim Behbehani* wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"I think those who are engaged in world politics and political sciences, will find the Kuwaiti policy a rich material which deserves the attention of everyone to study and benefit from the reasons and lessons learned from them.

"I believe that this achievement, I mean the sublimity and the tolerance in dealing with what had occurred in the past and tolerance towards a neighbor where we and the latter had no choice but remain subjected to the geographic fate.

'Amid the above, however, we find a ruler and leader on whom Almighty God has bestowed grace for deep thinking towards the future with wisdom and pride. In this connection, we say there actually is a consensus

that HH the Amir of the Almighty God to protect and bless him that he is the man who holds the compass in his hand and points it in the right direction.

"By doing so, His Highness, has distanced the peoples of the two regimes (the State of Kuwait and Iraq) away

Behbehani from the atmospheres of aggression and hatred and transformed the

same into a state of cooperation, tolerance and "His Highness has recorded and advanced positions that have actually surprised great powers, particularly his attendance at the Arab

summit that was held in Baghdad in March

2012. His participation in this event along with a few leaders and monarchs, who were present at this summit, actually impressed both the Iraqi officials and people. 'Although his visit in question to the Iraqi capital had not exceeded some hours during

which he was quoted as emphasizing, "We are with the Iraqi people and today we are striving to go beyond that pains and wounds in order to be able through their insistence (the Iraqis) and our support to this insistence for holding the summit in Baghdad and eventually achieving an additional value to the Arab joint action.' "However, personally speaking, I have

heard from many trustworthy people, about the participation of His Highness in Baghdad summit which constituted a surprise for them and how his attendance at this summit conference gave a significant weight in terms of representation, particularly in terms of the Arab countries participation in the same, but at vari-

"The participation of His Highness in the summit was actually highly appreciated particularly when he ordered extending aid and assistance to the Iraqis particularly those who had been displaced as a result of the war against the Islamic State (IS) or the so-called 'DAESH' elements.

"In this context, we look at the statements made by Iraqi President Fuad Maasoum during his visit to the State of Kuwait on Nov 21, 2017 when he met the Amir. Following the meeting Maasoum said, "His Highness the Amir Sabah Al-Ahmad is known to be a distinguished diplomat, man of reconciliation, enjoys a significant reputation at world level and we should benefit from his experience and as such the dialogue to which His Highness is still committed is the solution, hence you (the Kuwaitis) have to start with the dialogue.'

"In response to a question over the points of

difference (between the State of Kuwait and Iraq), the Iraqi president said "I did come here to be involved in detailed arguments in dealing with any of the files between the two countries such as the debts, the compensations, the water borders and the issue of Khour (bay) Abdullah, rather I came to open the door of cooperation before our two governments (that of the State of Kuwait and Iraq)."

"He went on to say, "We appreciate the attitudes of His Highness the Amir, particularly his participation in the Arab summit that was held in Baghdad in 2012 and the humanitarian assistance that had been extended by His Highness to the victims of the terrorist actions of 'DAESH' or al-Qaeda network in Iraq."

"In conclusion, we say what occurred in terms of relations with Iraq, is a wise policy followed by a wise man who has planted among us the confidence and the hope for a promising future.

"We pray to Almighty Allah to give His Highness long life, good health and help the State of Kuwait security and stability."

"Definitely, I am not against the reconstruction of Iraq and putting it back on the path of development and evolution due to many considerations the most significant of which related to the evolution of the Iraqis to enable them to build their country and contribute to the values of Arab identity," columnist Dr Ali Al-Zuabi wrote for Al-Shahed daily.

"This I say because we know Iraq was a homeland of many creators who were admired by the world for their scientific abilities and various creativities.

"As a matter of fact, this is a wakeup call for the Iraqis to come out of the claws of backwardness of the former Al-Baath regime because the consecutive governments have only impeded Baghdad's development post Saddam Hussein era, which could be deemed as extremely significant and none of us can ignore its importance and necessity.

"But our hesitant attitude towards the issue of Iraq's reconstruction can be attributed to the 'sick' political situation in that country which has become 'corrupt' from all aspects related to the government activities or to the private

"In other words, at the moment corruption is Iraq rampant where bribe rules the day which according to indications has reached a dangerous level. Unfortunately, the situation is well-know to every Iraqi and also the non government organizations working in Iraq which have their own extensions either in United Nations or in other organizations.

"For his part, Bader Shaker Al-Sayab (an Iraqi thinker and poet) says, "Not a single year goes by without the Iraqis tasting hunger." Of course, the term hunger here doesn't refer to natural grounds such as aridness or floods etc, rather it refers to 'political corruption' which has played a significant role to ingrain the socio-economic devastation and destruction' and its reflection on the standard of living of the

"In short the question of 'Iraq's reconstruction', will not tangibly affect the situations in that country as long as 'billions' of American dollars find its way into the pockets of 'politicians' and their brokers in Iraq.
"These billions should be put in the 'hands'

of international organizations or should be allocated for specific targeted projects and have close relations with the development of the

"I was thrilled by the reaction of some lawmakers to the obsession of some government officials on the issue of 'deteriorating expression of opinion' in the country," Dr Sulaiman Al-Khodhari wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"This coincides with the court judgments against opinion leaders based on the rule of

law, which seriously requires drastic amendment suitable for the twenty first century. Chief among them is Law No. 31/1970, especially Article 4 that stipulates punishment in the form of a minimum of three years jail term for anybody joining or carrying out an attack against a foreign country in a way that can put Kuwait on the verge of war or sever diplomatic ties, indicating the punishment is a life imprisonment if the action leads to a war or sever of political tie.

"In summary, the dignity of individuals and symbols of the nation remains preserved and protected legally with the presence of penal code for insult and defamation. This is the reason we are requesting for the deletion of jail penalty in such a circumstance. We should un-

derstand by now that a new world has evolved.
"For this reason, it is not possible in principle to continue considering viewpoints, blogging or articles as a form of threat to relationships among countries, because relations among countries are based on official statements issued to express positions and opinions, so blogs cannot affect relations among countries in any way".

"The president of the Philippines suddenly took a drastic decision, disregarding the level of respect and appreciation we have for him. We equally treat his subjects with respect through cooperation with the Embassy of Philippines in Kuwait whenever there are issues concerning their citizens," Ali Al-Busairi wrote for **Al-Shahed** daily.

"I was and still remain a friend of the Filipinos due to similar culture they share with Europe although a Third World country. I always deal with them with all humanity and respect for their nationality the same way I normally deal with others. Even as they are known for emotional naivety, we Arabs share some similarities with them, such as hospitality, kindness, loyalty and even betrayal. This is human nature!

"The people of Philippines are unique for hustling due to several centuries of oppression and repression they suffered under the rule of the Portuguese and the Spanish after the renowned adventurer Magellan discovered the Philippines route. The Filipino Muslim hero Lapu-Lapu killed Magellan when he asked the former to surrender in the name of Christ, saying he was of white race with the best civilization for which he deserved to be ruling Mactan Island better than the Muslim leader. This story gives us an idea of the impression Filipinos have about colonization and the need for freedom."

"The National Assembly will organize a special session to vote on the request submitted by ten MPs to grant confidence to the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister of Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh," Abdulrahman Al-Awwad wrote for Al-Sabah daily.

"The statement issued by the Cabinet after its weekly meeting revealed its support of the minister's stance and performance during the grilling session as well as her refutation of the grilling points with facts and documents.

"The statement also indicated the desire of the Cabinet to support the tangible efforts exerted by the minister in achieving the desired goals and performing her national duty towards the homeland and citizens.

"Of course the stance of the government is predictable and not surprising. The deciding factor is only the Parliament's stance. Ministers are not entitled to participate in the voting in order to raise the confidence as per the Kuwaiti Constitution. Undoubtedly, the Kuwaiti

people are waiting for the result.
"Finally, we urge you to follow your conscience when judging Al-Sabeeh who worthily succeeded in refuting the points of the interpellation, and to honor her excellent ministerial performance.

— Compiled by Zaki Taleb



News in Brief

Congrats pour in: Kuwait's Defense Minister and First Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah was inundated Thursday with letters of congratulations, nearly two months after he took the helm of the defense ministry. Sheikh Nasser Al-Sabah received messages from his counterparts in Greece and Singapore, Panos Kammenos and Dr Ng Eng Hen, respectively, wishing him the best as he settles into his new position, read a statement by the Kuwaiti defense

Meanwhile, Morocco's Minister-Delegate for National Defense Abdellatif Loudiyi and Kyrgyzstan's First Deputy Prime Minister Askarbek Shadiyev were also among those to have penned letters to the Kuwaiti defense minister, the statement added. In response, Sheikh Nasser Al-Sabah wrote to the officials, thanking them for the well wishes. (KUNA)

Stolen car set alight: Ahmadi securitymen recovered the charred remains of a stolen vehicle in Wafra

Apparently, the person who stole the vehicle abandoned it in the aforementioned location and set it on fire. The owner had earlier reported the vehicle missing at a police station in the area. Detectives have since lifted fingerprint from the vehicle to trail the suspects.

Meanwhile, a Kuwaiti citizen lodged a complaint

with officers at Saad Al-Abdullah police station against unknown person (s) that stole his vehicle. He told the officers the vehicle was parked in front of his house and he was surprised to find it missing. Details of the vehicle have since been circulated to security checkpoints.

Theft disrupts production: Personnel from the Criminal Investigations Department have arrested a Saudi and a Kuwaiti for stealing power cables from oil wells as a result of which oil production was disrupted, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to security sources the suspects entered the area by cutting the wire fence of one of the oil companies taking advantage of the absence of the CCTV cameras around the wells.

According to a security source, investigations carried out by securitymen led to arrest of the two suspects who admitted to stealing 27 cables from different oil wells and selling them to Iranians in Amghara scrap market.



Participants of the course. 'Consolidating national identity'

Ministry of Interior recently concluded the third training course on 'Consolidating the National Identity' in collaboration with the Public Authority for Youth Af-

Participation in the event cut across the Ministry of Defense, National Guard, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate and Kuwait University

Ministry of Interior Undersecretary General Mahmoud Al-Lieutenant Dousari said the door of the ministry is

wide open for training and consolidating expertise, while improving the compe tence of Kuwaitis.

He affirmed the country is blessed with youthful elements and thanked the organizers who deemed it fit to hold the event on the occasion of the 12th anniversary of the Amir's ascension to power, coinciding with the National Days festivities. He congratulated the Amir and all citizens of Kuwait on the auspicious occasion.

Other Voices

'Take pain for nation's gain'

Devaluation only solution

By Ahmad Al-Sarraf

A majority of the people were neither surprised by the size of deficit in the balance of payments nor when the government had to borrow to finance the state budget deficit

There is almost unanimity in the impossibility of addressing the budget deficit. No one wants to come close to salaries and subsidies, and it is clear that the government is unable to curb spending or deal more seriously with the severe economic problems; therefore the consequences will be actually terrible.

One of the solutions I have been advocating for more than 20 years, and constantly, is to reof the dinar as long as it is not possible to approach the payroll item.

The experience we witnessed during the period of

Al-Sarraf Saddam's occupation of Kuwait when everyone accepted, for seven months, the price of two-and-ahalf dollars in exchange for one Kuwaiti dinar, but after the liberation, the political and financial authorities decided to go back to the dinar to its pre-invasion rate of \$3.5.

It was an incorrect political decision that caused the state to lose billions of dollars because the financial system had to repay the debts of Kuwait for \$3.5 instead of \$2.5.

The banks also transferred hundreds of millions of dinars from the balances of residents who did not return to Kuwait for one reason or another and converted them

at \$3.5 per dinar instead of 2.5, although these residents never dreamt of getting some of their assets.

Therefore, the government today has no alternative but to seriously reconsider the issue of gradual devaluation of the Kuwaiti dinar, even if for two years. It is not acceptable to remain as it is now.

I say that although I will be harmed as an investor and trader, but national interest, and future generations in the long term are more important than my personal interest. We demand devaluation in spite of the recent rise in oil prices, but who will ensure that the situation remains as it is, noting that the state budget deficit is increasing year after year.

The devaluation of the exchange rate will strengthen Kuwait's reserves in dollars and other currencies. The low rate of the dinar will encourage increasing exports and reduce the unjustified expansion of imports.

The proposed exchange rate will also limit the unjustified consumption and tourism, which will, of course have a negative impact on the income of domestic and small labor, as it will receive less dollars for the salaries the workers receive.

The subsidies on commodities offered by the government to families should also be rationalized and limited to lowincome people, while fuel and electricity prices should be gradually raised, and apply a system similar to progressive taxes so that the low-income or pensioners are not affected.

Economist Marwan Salama believes that reducing the dinar rate will push the government, in general, to rationalize its unjustified spending. We write and say and ask, perhaps ... and perhaps.

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News in Brief

Jail for blogger: The Criminal Court sentenced in absentia blogger Saqer Al-Hashash to five-year imprisonment with hard labor for posting messages deemed offensive to the entity of His Highness the Amir on his Twitter account, says

Al-Seyassah. The Public Prosecution had pressed the charges against the blogger after it was notified by the Ministry of Interior.

Meanwhile, the Court of Cassation has overruled the verdict of the lower court and sentenced an expatriate taxi driver to three years in prison for swindling a young man of special needs Kuwaiti, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The suspect reportedly took advantage of the mental state of the plaintiff and took KD 15,000 from him to 'get' for him a university certificate from abroad, on the

strength of a promissory note. The plaintiff also bought seven smart

phones and gave them to the defendant.

Kuwaiti couples hurt: Two Kuwaiti couples sustained minor injuries in a traffic accident that occurred in Sydney, Australia, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

A report on the accident was presented in an Australian channel, as per which a huge truck crashed into a taxi and dragged it across more than 30 meters. The taxi was completely damaged but the passengers - two couples from Kuwait - and the taxi driver sustained minor injuries and were treated at the nearest hospital. The couples were heading to the airport after spending their honeymoon in Australia.

The company to which the truck belongs stated in the press release that the person responsible for the accident is still

unknown.

Wallet stolen: A Kuwaiti citizen reported at Fahaheel Police Station the theft of his wallet from his vehicle, says Al-Seyassah. According to security sources, the citizen said he was in Fahaheel area to do some shopping and had returned to his parked vehicle to discover that one of the glass windows of his vehicle was broken and his wallet was missing.

Officers from the General Department of Criminal Evidences lifted fingerprints and other evidences from the vehicle to identify the unknown thief.

'First Riot contest': Under the auspices of Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Special Security Affairs Major General Shukri Al-Najjar, the First Riot Competition was organized with the participation of National Guard and other sectors of Kuwait Armed Forces, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The competition witnessed the participation of 75 officers and members of Anti-Riot Department. There were five teams and each team comprised of 15 contestants. The five teams competed to deal with riots using latest technologies and sophisticated weapons in addition to tactical methods to control rioters and hooligans. The competition also helped raise the level of fitness. The competition comes in line with the strategy of Ministry of Interior to develop the skills of those working in anti-riots field. A number of directors and deputy directors from General Directorate for Special Forces were among the attendees of the competition.

Raids find cross-dressers, gays offering massage in health clubs

Crime rate drops in 2017: report

By Fares Al-Abdan/Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah Staff and Agencies KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Members of the joint committee from Public **Authority for Manpower** (PAM), Moral Detectives Department, and Ministry of Commerce and Industry raided health clubs for men where customers were enjoying relaxing massage services in the hands of gays.

Targeting health clubs in Farwaniya Governorate, the committee carried out the campaign after receiving a number of complaints from citizens on the alleged immoral activities in such places.

In an attempt to conceal the immoral activities, a suspected health club installed a signboard urging customers to strictly comply with Islamic regulations. However, the committee found a cross dresser with full makeup inside the health club.

Some health clubs resorted to de ceiving methods like renting a separate flat in the same building where they are located and the separate flat is used for indecent activities.

The services they provide have evolved to the extent that they use chocolate and strawberry for massage

The committee had no recourse but to utilize certain tactics so one of its members pretended to be a customer. He was in constant communication with other members of the committee, informing them the right time to raid

the erring health clubs. Deputy Director General of Manpower Protection Department at PAM Abdullah Al-Mutawtah disclosed the committee will continue its campaign to track down all violating establish-

Al-Mutawtah said the recent campaign resulted in the arrest of two cross dressers and registration of several violations which were referred to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for action.

Crime rates drop: Crimes in Kuwait

dropped by 18.5 percent in 2017 compared to the previous year, a ranking officer of the Ministry of Interior said on Thursday, according to KUNA.

The ministry annual statistics showed that criminal acts deemed harmful to public interest decreased by 78.57 percent in 2017 also in contrast to 2016, whereas crimes against individuals rose by 48.14 percent, said

Major General Sehab Al-Shemmari. Maj Gen Al-Shemmari, the general director of the General Department of Criminal Evidence, said in a statement that financial crimes fell by 11.5 percent and misdemeanor crimes det-





KFSD photos

Top and above: KFSD officials take a round of the massive building.

KFSD team inspects 'Jazeera' Terminal 6

Deputy Director General of Fire Prevention Sector at Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) Major General Khaled Abdullah Fahad and his accompanying delegation Wednesday visited the Terminal 6 building of Al-Jazeera Airways which is currently under construc-

According to a press release issued by KFSD, the delegation inspected the massive building to ensure compliance to the prevention measures and conditions set by KFSD for major projects in the

The visit is part of a series of visits that the sector is organizing due to the keenness of KFSD leadership to ensure mega projects in the country conform to the international safety standards and prevention specifications to curb any possible accidents in the future.

rimental to public interest dropped by

Deaths resulting from traffic accidents amounted to 424 in 2016 and 428 last year. Recorded drug dealing cases reached 33 in 2016 and 68 last

Human trafficking: A team from the Closed Companies Unit of Inspection Department at General Department for Residency Security Affairs discovered 15 companies that do not practice any activities but have 141 laborers under their sponsorship.

In a press statement issued by Ministry of Interior, the General Department of Public Relations and Security Media explained that the team conducted an inspection tour of the violating companies in Ahmadi Governorate and discovered the abovementioned companies. The concerned authorities have been notified so that necessary legal action can be taken.

Case adjourned: The Court of Appeals presided over by Judge Abdulrahman Al-Darmi adjourned to February 7 the case filed against a citizen who is accused of attempted murder of his grandmother by stabbing her on the chest with a knife.

The Public Prosecution had charged the citizen of deliberate murder attempt, beating and causing facial fractures and other injuries on the vic-

The defense counsel Lawyer Mohammed Al-Otaibi affirmed the lack of incriminating evidences against his client by presenting peremptory

Custody extended: The Sentences Renewal Judge has remanded the accused Kuwaiti to further police custody, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily said the man is accused

of premeditatedly murdering his wife and the fetus. The court has set the hearing session to Feb 13, 2018. Earlier it was reported the 27-yearold Kuwaiti had surrendered to the

Taima Police Station after murdering his 22-year-old pregnant wife from an unidentified GCC state by strangling her to death. When police and paramedics

rushed to the house, they found the lifeless body of the wife sprawled on the floor of the house.

It was alleged that the suspect committed the crime when he was under the influence of drugs. Some newspapers said the wife was Saudi.

After the incident the suspect took the wife to the hospital, but doctors could not save her.

31 officials in KD 5.5m scam probe

Govt to review petition on expat health charges

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: The Court of Appeals Wednesday adjourned to March 4 the petition presented by the counsel to a group of expatriates who called for the cancellation of increase in health charges for expatriates. The petition was adjourned for review by the government.

The plaintiff counsel explained in the petition that the decision to increase health charges for expatriates in public hospitals contradicts the Constitution and law. The contested decision was to replace an effective law No. 1/1999 but a law cannot be

amended or cancelled by a ministerial decision but only by a similar

In its memo to the court, the Fatwa and Legislation Department stressed the absence of interest for the plaintiff, who is a citizen due to which the decision does not concern

It said the decision is intended exclusively for expatriates and it is applied everywhere around the world, stressing the lack of abuse of power.

The department affirmed that the decision does not contradict the health insurance law for expatriates.

31 under probe: The Misdemeanor Court has scheduled March 14 for the hearing on a lawsuit involving 31 government officials accused of facilitating unlawful collection of KD 5.5 million from the public fund while awarding the Jaber Stadium. The officials were from the Ministry of Public Works and Public Authority for Youth and Sports, as well as the contractor who handled the pro-

The court decided to invite the Director General of Public Authority for Youth and Sports Dr Hamoud Fleitah and Dr Hassan Kamal from Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research as prosecution witnesses. All accused persons pleaded not guilty to the allegations, while their counsel requested more time to study the case for proper defense.

It will be recalled the accused persons were initially 37 before six of them were exonerated. The Public Prosecution Department charged them for facilitating unlawful collection of the sum, which had been kept in the custody of the Ministry of Public Works to execute the con-

The officials should not have released the fund knowing well that there were some observations in the project, and so the action was regarded as a case of forgery.

Committee, interior minister discuss 'rights' of Bedouns

MP reiterates intention to grill PM

By Abubakar A. Ibrahim

Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: The parliamentary Human Rights Committee on Thursday discussed with **Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh** Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah the civil and social rights of Bedouns, as well as the security restrictions imposed on them.

Committee Chairman MP Adel Al-Damkhi said they agreed to meet the minister again after two months to look into the latest measures taken to address issues concerning Bedouns.

In Thursday's meeting, the commit-

Indicating that the three-week am-

nesty period is not enough for those

who seek to amend their legal status.

the ambassador urged Ministry of In-

terior to extend the period in order to

allow as many violators as possible to

cerning the statements issued by

President Duterte which have been de-

scribed as "aggressive", Ambassador

O. Villa stressed that politicians often

have their own ways of dealing with

issues, highlighting the keenness of

President Duterte to defend the rights

of Filipino citizens who work outside

in Kuwait, the ambassador explained

that there are about 262,000 Filipino

expatriates working in Kuwait, as per

reports of Ministry of Interior. About

two thirds of them work as domestic

workers, and 3.6 percent of them have

problems with their employers. How-

ever, this rate is small compared to the

large number of Filipino expatriates in

their cooperation in dealing with every

case of abuse of Filipino expatriates in

He thanked Ministry of Interior for

In response to a question concern-

ing the role played by social media

Regarding the Filipino community

In his response to a question con-

benefit from the amnesty.

the Philippines.

Kuwait.

Continued from Page 1

We can

tee stressed the need to end the suffering of Bedouns and grant them civil and social rights. The committee also emphasized the importance of changing the status of those excluded from the 1965 census to alleviate their suffering, he added.

On the other hand, the committee will invite Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh to a meeting soon to tackle the humanitarian issues raised during her grilling.

Meanwhile, MP Riyadh Al-Adsani has reiterated his intention to grill His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak if the fees for services provided to citizens will increase.

He voiced objection to the government's approach in imposing value added tax, warning about its negative impact on the middle class.

He condemned talks on the supposed budget deficit, pointing out that the price of a barrel of oil in the budget is \$50 while the current price

in blowing up the issue, Ambassador

O. Villa said, "Individual cases are

highlighted on social media. How-

ever, these cases were not fabricated.

There are higher possibility for such

issues to be brought to light in Kuwait

compared to other Gulf countries due

to higher freedom and openness in Ku-

He indicated that the decision to

suspend sending Filipino workers to

Kuwait is still valid; however, Filipino

residents of Kuwait who were spend-

ing their vacation in the Philippines are

allowed to return to Kuwait.

Ambassador O. Villa revealed

that a total of 5,300 Filipino laborers

were reported as absconding by their

employers during the years 2016 and

2017, indicating that the embassy re-

ceives about five to ten absconding

He explained that the laborers es-

cape due to different reasons including

physical and mental abuse, violation

of the provisions of labor contracts,

sexual harassment, weak health and

homesickness. The total number of

sexual harassment and abuse cases is

a meeting will be held between of-

ficials from foreign ministries of both

Kuwait and the Philippines this month,

insisting that the meeting was set prior

tremendous efforts to inform Filipino

residents about their rights and evalu-

He affirmed that the embassy exerts

to the emergence of the recent issue.

Ambassador O. Villa indicated that

cases on a daily basis.

approximately 100.

is \$65 which means the revenues have

He called for strengthening the foreign investments of the State, finding economic alternatives and reducing wastage in the government.

In another development, Chairman of the Kuwaitization and Employment Committee MP Khalil Al-Saleh praised the efforts of Undersecretary of the State Ministry for Youth Affairs Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah in encouraging Kuwaiti talent.

Al-Saleh disclosed he reviewed the distinguished experience of Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah in opening work horizons for Kuwaiti youths.

He affirmed the committee fully supports efforts to encourage Kuwaiti youths to put up their own businesses and expand the employment scope in order to attract young people.

uncovering irregularities in State institutions in a bid to address the unemployment problem.

ates the situation of the Filipino community in Kuwait on a daily basis, in-

Ambassador O. Villa expressed hope that the current issue will be re-

Coalition bids

goal and the same vision and have no

Matar al-Khyeli said: "Saudi Arabia and the UAE stand together with the

Hani bin Breik, a leader of the South-

Both it and Saudi Arabia have urged Hadi's government to heed the separatists' grievances and called on all

At least 38 people have been killed and 222 wounded in Aden since Sunday, according to the International

The UN agency for humanitarian affairs reported a "cautious calm" in the city late on Wednesday but said aid ships were still unable to dock.

He added the committee is keen on

dicating that ten percent of them have low educational qualifications.

Continued from Page 1

UAE Major General Mohammed

Yemeni people and are leading reconciliation efforts between the Yemeni The UAE has close ties to separatist

ern Transitional Council to which many of the forces now in control of Aden are loyal.

sides to show restraint.

Committee of the Red Cross.

Even before the latest fighting, Ye-

serious humanitarian crisis, with some 8.4 million of its 22.2 million population at risk of famine, according to the

men already faced the world's most

Doubt clouds

Continued from Page 1

and reduce its dependence on oil. Prince Alwaleed, a nephew of King Salman, holds stakes in major international companies including Citigroup, Twitter, and ride-hailing firm Lyft.

In the first few days after his detention, Kingdom Holding's share price plunged 23 percent, erasing \$2.2 billion of his personal fortune on paper.

After a jump this week, the stock has regained almost all that it lost, but during his detention the overall stock market rose 10 percent. Kingdom shares do not reflect that gain, suggesting investors are still discounting the

Kingdom published a photo of Prince Alwaleed reviewing documents behind a large wooden desk and still sporting the grey beard he grew in de-

"We are very pleased to welcome back (His Royal Highness) Prince Alwaleed to continue his important work as Chairman of Kingdom Holding Company," Chief Executive Talal Almaimansaid said.

The firm's strategy is aligned with the Vision 2030 reform agenda "to create strong investor appeal and a business environment in which KHC and our partners can flourish", he added.

Prince Alwaleed's predicament suggests Saudi tycoons who have long been content to focus on amassing huge profits must now consider whether the government's anti-corruption drive could stop them in their tracks.

Saudi Arabia's attorney general said on Tuesday that settlement deals had secured just over \$100 billion from members of the elite. He did not provide a breakdown, and Reuters could not verify that figure.

In a video, property mogul Mohammed Aboud al-Amoudi sits in a black office chair at his home in Jeddah receiving kisses on the hand and forehead from a procession of well-wishers who utter thanksgiving for his safe return after nearly three months in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Riyadh.

A company representative reached by phone said Amoudi was in good

"It is as if he was travelling and returned, nothing more," said the person who declined to be named, adding it was not clear if he would run the company again. Associates of other released detain-

ees, including media magnate Waleed al-Ibrahim and retail billionaire Fawaz al-Hokair, told Reuters they were at home catching up with family and An email to MBC employees seen

by Reuters described Ibrahim as "fit and eager to get back". It said he would travel to Dubai in a couple of weeks to get "back in the driving seat". Hokair, meanwhile, is hosting din-

ners for guests, according to one attendee. The stock price of his company, fashion retailer Fawaz Abdulaziz Alhokair Co, is still 13 percent below its level just before he was detained. "It's as if he was on a business trip

or in a summer holiday or a religious trip. He is fully motivated, full of ambitions," the attendee said. "He does not talk about anything, he

just says he was happy and received good treatment." These men are among the last group

released from the Ritz, which had been used since November as a prison and interrogation centre for dozens of senior princes, ministers and businessmen and was cleared out on Tuesday. Specific allegations against the men

and the settlements they agreed before their release were kept secret. Some may have been moved to prison after refusing to admit wrongdoing and reach financial settlements; they may stand trial. Notably absent from the final batch

of releases were Prince Turki bin Abdullah, the king's nephew, and dismissed Economy Minister Adel Fakieh. Their fates remain unknown.

Two bankers said assets or corporate ownership transfers had not yet been made for the last batch of released detainees and any handovers could be shielded from public view for some time through what one banker described as "very clever lawyers and

Critics have described the anti-corruption campaign as a shakedown and power move by the Crown Prince. The government denies this.

As workers removed security barriers at the Ritz-Carlton in anticipation of the hotel's reopening in mid-February, recently checked-out "guests" reconnected with loved ones.

Pictures shared on social media showed Alwaleed visiting an ill nephew in hospital. On Twitter, people urged him to continue his charitable

Syrian Kurds

Continued from Page 1

than 300,000 civilians - is surrounded by territory held by Syrian government forces or al-Qaedalinked militants. The Americans' priority for the

YPG - the main Kurdish militia that forms the backbone of forces allied to the US — is for them to govern the large swath of territory wrested from the Islamic State group in northern and eastern Syria, including the city of Raqqa. Washington wants to prevent IS from resurging and keep Damascus' ally, Iran, out of the area.

Afrin is not central to those American goals and US officials say it will distract from the war on IS.

The US-led coalition has distanced itself from the Kurdish forces in Afrin, saying they have not received American training and were not part of the war against the Islamic State group in eastern Syria. But it also implicitly criticized the Turkish assault as un-

"Increased violence in Afrin disrupts what was a relatively stable area of Syria. Furthermore, it distracts from efforts to ensure the lasting defeat of DAESH and could be exploited by DAESH for resupply and safe haven, the coalition said in an emailed statement to the AP, using the Arabic acronym for IS.

For its part, Turkey views the YPG as an extension of its own Kurdish insurgent groups and has vowed to "purge" them from its borders.

While the US may distance itself from the fighting in Afrin, it can't sit by silently if Turkey goes ahead with its threat to expand the fight to Manbij, a Syrian town to the east where American troops are deployed alongside Kurdish forces that took the town from IS in 2016.

One option is a proposal by the Kurds to persuade Assad to deploy his troops as a buffer between the Kurds and Turks in Afrin. Nobohar Mustafa, a Kurdish envoy to Washington, said the Americans appear open to that proposal. However, so far Assad's government has refused; they want full control of the area.

Another option could be to seek a compromise with Turkey by withdrawing US and Kurdish forces from Manbij, said Elizabeth Teoman, a Turkey specialist with the Institute for the Study of War.

"The Turks may accept that as an intermediate step, but the US will consistently face threats of escalation from Turkey as long as we maintain our partnership with the Syrian Kurdish YPG," Teoman said.

US officials have reportedly said recently that they have no intention of pulling out of Manbij.

Kurdish officials say they don't expect the Americans to go to war with Turkey or send troops to fight with them in Afrin.

But "this doesn't mean the US doesn't have a role in stopping the war on Afrin," said Mustafa, the Kurdish envoy to Washington. She said Kurdish officials weren't surprised the Americans have distanced themselves from the Afrin dispute "but we didn't expect their stance to be that low.

She and Khalil have lobbied Washington and Europe for a more aggressive stance against Turkey's advances. Other than the proposal to allow Syrian border guards to deploy, they have suggested international observers along a narrow buffer zone. Mustafa said the US could argue that the YPG presence in northwestern Syria, where al-Qaeda-linked militants have their stronghold, is necessary to fight terrorism. Khalil said he has pressed other NATO members to urge Turkey to stop airstrikes.

'No lessons'

Turkey on Thursday told France to stop lecturing it over its campaign in Syria, where Ankara is pressing a fierce offensive against a Kurdish mi-

The warning from Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu came a day after French President Emmanuel Macron told Ankara it would be a "real problem" if its intervention turned into an outright "invasion".

France cannot give us lessons on this issue," Cavusoglu told reporters in televised comments.

"We are not France, which occupied Africa," he said referring to France's colonial past.

Cavusoglu said European leaders had initially expressed support for Turkey's campaign in Syria during talks with Ankara, but that they appeared to have changed their stance in public comments.

"Unfortunately Europeans are twofaced," he remarked.

Reacting to Macron's remarks, Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said that any suggestion that Ankara had broader designs in Syria, beyond pushing the YPG back from the border, was "totally wrong".

"The whole world knows, or should know, that Turkey is not engaged in an invasion," he said on Wednesday.

Earlier in the week, Macron had also angered Ankara by pledging to observe a "Day of Remembrance of the (Armenian) genocide" in talks with Armenian groups in France.

20 civilians killed

At least twenty civilians were killed Thursday in Syrian government air strikes on rebel-held territory in the country's north, a war monitor said.

The barrage of bombardment pounded several areas in the northern provinces of Aleppo and Idlib, where government troops are waging a Russian-backed assault against rebels and jihadists.

"Regime raids hit two villages in the south of Aleppo province, killing 15 civilians," said Rami Abdel Rahman, who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights moni-In the neighbouring province of

Idlib, government air strikes killed five civilians in the town of Saraqeb, the Observatory said. That broad region is held by Hayat

Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which is domi-

nated by al-Qaeda's one-time affiliate in Syria. Syrian government troops launched a ferocious offensive in late December to retake parts of Idlib and secure a key

road leading from Aleppo south to the Regime forces have made key gains, recapturing the Abu Duhur

military airport and dozens of nearby villages. Since it erupted in 2011, Syria's conflict has morphed from a protest movement into a brutal and complex

war that has left 340,000 people In an attempt to bring an end to the fighting, backers of opposing sides last year agreed to four "de-escalation"

zones in the country.

Newswatch

Continued from Page 1

ANKARA: The top adviser to **Iran**'s supreme leader **Ayatollah Ali Khamenei** said on Thursday the country's leadership had no intention of reining in its influence across the Middle East despite US pressure to do so, the semi-official Fars news agency reported.

President Donald Trump, who sees Iran as a rising threat to regional stability in the Middle East, has pledged to work with Gulf Arab states and Israel to curb what they say are Tehran's attempts to extend its influence in the region.

"Iran's influence in the region is inevitable and to remain a key player in the region, this influ-ence will continue," the adviser, Ali Akbar Velayati, was quoted by Fars as saying. (RTRS)

RABAT: Moroccan authorities have arrested seven suspected Islamic State militants who had been planning attacks, the interior ministry said on Thursday.

The suspects had been active in a cell in the northern city of Tanger and northeastern city if Meknes and planned attacks, the ministry said in a statement, adding that arms and electronic devices had been seized. (RTRS)

CAIRO: The US-led coalition against the Islamic State group says a service member has died in a "non-combat-related incident."

The statement released by the US Central Command on Thursday did not give the soldier's nationality or provide further details. It says the soldier died Wednesday and that the incident is under investigation.

The soldier was part of Operation Inherent Resolve, the mission to defeat the Islamic State group in **Iraq** and **Syria**. (AP)

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration said Wednesday that it would allow nearly 7,000 Syrians to remain in the United States for another 18 months but won't let more Syrian citizens apply for the special protection program.

The decision was a partial relief for aid organizations and advocates for displaced Syrians who had feared President Trump might end the program entirely, forcing those in the US to leave or face deportation. Yet those same groups blasted the president for excluding more recent arrivals to the US, pointing out that **Syria** remains devoid of any notion of stability or normalcy.

ALGIERS: The Algerian army has killed a senior official of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in an operation in the northeast of the country, officials said Wednesday.

Adel Seghiri — also known as Abu Ruwaha al-Qasantini was among those running the group's Al-Andalus media wing responsible for putting out videos and statements.

The army said it killed "two dangerous terrorists" in the **Jijel** region, 400 kms (250 miles) east of the capital Algiers. (AFP)

LONDON: A British man who was "obsessed" with Muslims was found guilty on Thursday of murder and attempted murder after deliberately driving into a group of people outside a London mosque.

Jurors found **Darren Os-**

borne, 48, from the Welsh capital **Cardiff**, guilty of murdering 51-year-old **Makram Ali** and trying to kill others in the **Fins**bury Park area of north London on June 19, in a case that was prosecuted as an act of terrorism. (AFP)

JOHANNESBURG: Sibanye-Stillwater said on Thursday that over 1,000 miners were stuck underground at its Beatrix gold mine in South Africa after a storm knocked out power, but they were not in danger.

Spokesman James Wellsted

said the miners were safe and receiving food and water. Power was being restored to the mine but there was not yet enough to bring the miners to the surface.

KABUL: An Afghan official says two **US** drone strikes this week hit a building where dozens of Taleban were meeting in ens of Taleban were meeting in southeastern province of Ghazni, killing 26 insurgents and wounding 22.

Arif Noori, a provincial spokesman, says the drone assault was carried out on Thoday during an effective and the control of the

Tuesday during an offensive in Ghazni province's Andar district where the US military came to the aid of Afghan security forces battling the Taleban. (AP)

GAZA CITY: At least seven Palestinians died in an explosion in Gaza City Thursday, in what officials said was an intentional act after a family quarrel.

"Seven people including children died and around 30 others were injured in an explosion at a home" in Gaza City, a spokesman for the health ministry said.

A police statement said a member of the Abu Assi family deliberately set a gas canister on fire during a family quarrel, leading to the explosion. (AFP)



World News Roundup

America

Lawmakers put medical skills to work: Republican members of Congress with medical experience put their skills to work after a train carrying dozens of them crashed into a garbage truck in rural Virginia, killing one person in the truck and injuring others.

The congressmen were on their way to a strategy retreat in the countryside when the collision occurred around 11:20 am Wednesday in Crozet, about 125 miles (200 kms) southwest of Washington. No serious injuries were reported aboard the chartered Amtrak train, which set out from the nation's capital with lawmakers, family members and staff for the luxury Greenbrier resort in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. At least two other people in the truck were reported seriously hurt.

Rep James Comer of Kentucky said about 100 Republican lawmakers were on the train when the crash made him jump out of his seat.

"I looked out the side of the window and then I could see a truck, just in pieces out the side of the window," Comer said. He said Capitol police officers quickly jumped off the train but came back and asked for any doctors to help. (AP)

Missile interceptor fails again: A test of a US missile interceptor failed in Hawaii on Wednesday, a defense official said, marking the second such unsuccessful attempt in less than



This photo provided by Repruce Poliquin, R-Maine, shows emergency personnel standing near a chartered train carrying members of Congress after it hit a garbage truck in Crozet Va, on Jan 31, 2018. No lawmakers were believed injured. (AP)

a year. The test using the Aegis Ashore system occurred at the Pacific Missile Range Facility on the island of Kauai, Missile Defense Agency spokesman Mark Wright said in a statement.

Wright said the test was of an SM-3 Block IIA missile, made by arms giant Raytheon and designed to intercept intermediate-range ballistic missiles.

A defense official told AFP the test was a failure and investigators have opened a probe. Wednesday's failure comes after another unsuccessful test in June of the missile, which is being jointly developed by the United States and Japan. A test firing in February 2017 was successful. (AFP)

Gowdy to leave House: Rep Trey Gowdy, a powerful GOP watchdog who built his name leading the investigation into the 2012 attacks against Americans in Benghazi, Libya, has become the latest prominent Repblican to head for the exits rather than run for another term. The former South Carolina prosecutor who is chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee said in a statement Wednesday that he planned to return to the justice system, though he did not elaborate.

The committee's lengthy investigation into the attacks that killed the US ambassador and three other Americans focused heavily on Hillary Clinton's role as secretary of state, though an 800-page report produced no smoking gun pointing to wrongdoing by her. The investigation also revealed that Clinton used a private email server for government work, prompting an FBI investigation that proved to be an albatross in the Democrat's 2016 presidential campaign. (AP)

No charges for officers: A grand jury has declined to bring charges against Dallas police officers who used a bomb-carrying robot to

kill a sniper who had just gunned down five officers during a downtown rally, prosecutors announced Wednesday.

The Dallas County District Attorney's office

said in a release that investigators presented their findings to a grand jury more than a year after the July 7, 2016, attack by Micah Johnson, a 25-year-old Army reservist who investigators said was upset by recent shootings of black men by police. The use of the robot to detonate a

pound of C4 explosives near Johnson, killing him, was a first for a US police department. David Brown, who was the police chief at the time and has since retired, said shortly after Johnson was killed that he made the decision to use the robot because negotiations had failed and he wanted to end the continued threat to

officers. Police said they believed Johnson was also wounded by gunfire, but few details about the police response that night have been shared

A spokeswoman for the district attorney's office said staff could not discuss what evidence

was presented to the grand jury.
Veterans Health Administration documents showed that Johnson sought mental health treatment for anxiety, depression and hallucinations after he returned from Afghanistan. (AP)

US public health chief quits: The head of the leading US public health agency has resigned because of financial conflicts of interest that documents showed included purchases of tobacco and healthcare stocks while in office.

Dr Brenda Fitzgerald, director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, held "certain complex financial interests" that she could not sell in time, forcing her to recuse herself from many public health duties, a Department of Health and Human Services statement said on Wednesday.

A physician and former commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Health, Fitzgerald is the second high-profile health official in the year-old Republican Trump administration to leave over financial and ethical questions.

She leaves as the country is dealing with its

worst flu season in years.
Dr Anne Schuchat, CDC principal deputy director with 30 years at the agency, will take over until a new director is named, the CDC said in a statement. Schuchat is a former acting CDC director. (RTRS)



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World News Roundup



US President Donald Trump speaks during a tax reform meeting with American workers in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, DC, on Jan 31. (AFP)

Immigration

Doubt on deal

Trump & Dems clash on immigration looms

WASHINGTON, Feb 1, (Agencies): A showdown over US immigration policy loomed Wednesday after President **Donald Trump** laid out a tough deal in his State of The Union address that offers citizenship to 1.8 million "Dreamers" in exchange for sharp overall cuts to immigration.

Less than two weeks after Democrats forced a three-day shutdown of the government over the issue, the Republican president said he would not give in to anything less than a harsh cutback on existing immigration and massive funding for a wall on the Mexican

In exchange, Trump is offering a 12-year pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million people who came to the US illegally as children, 700,000 of whom are set to lose their current protection from deportation on March 6



Democrats are pushing for the fate of the Dreamers to be tackled as a priority, and are resisting Republican efforts to tie it into a broader bargain on immigration.

The stalemate led Democrats to block a one-month budget extension on January 19, forcing a partial shutdown of the federal government, and the same threat looms over the new deadline for a long-term

budget, February 8. In his annual speech before Congress late Tuesday, Trump again portrayed legal and illegal immigration as a threat to the country, highlighting murders by gang members from other countries and terror attacks by people who entered the United States legally.

Trump's State of the Union offer of a "down-themiddle compromise" on immigration did nothing to move Republicans and Democrats closer to a deal, as Democrats accused the president of lacing his speech with racially charged remarks and Republicans dug in on their demands. The reaction to Trump's highprofile overture suggested both parties were settling into a protracted tug-of-war.

The standoff left serious doubt whether the two parties could reach an election-year pact to protect hundreds of thousands of young immigrants from deportation, sharpen border security and take other steps to curb immigration. The two parties had not even settled on a deadline for an agreement — a bad sign in an institution that rarely acts unless under pressure.

"If the deadline is Feb 8, we're not going to make it," No. 2 House Democratic leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland said Wednesday, noting a looming deadline for approving government funding to avoid another

"It's going to take work for us to build a consensus," Rep Steve Scalise, R-La., the House GOP vote counter, said in an interview Tuesday. Scalise noted that Republicans took "weeks and weeks" to craft tax legislation last year.

Meanwhile, Federal immigration authorities formalized a policy Wednesday to send deportation agents to federal, state and local courthouses to make arrests, dismissing complaints from judges and advocacy groups that it instills fear among crime victims, witnesses and family members. The two-page directive from US Immigration and Customs Enforcement said it will enter courthouses only for specific targets, such as convicted criminals, gang members, public safety threats and immigrants who have been previously deported or ordered to leave. Family, friends and witnesses won't be picked up for deportation but ICE leaves a caveat for "special circumstances."

BOULEVARD, California: Seventy-seven people who entered the United States illegally were found packed inside a sweltering truck near the Mexico border, and the driver was charged with transporting people for financial gain, authorities said.

Five children were among those found Monday evening in the cargo area of a brown truck painted to resemble a United Parcel Service vehicle, authorities

The California Highway Patrol pulled the truck over because it had no tags and was weaving on Old Highway 80 in Boulevard, a tiny desert community in

San Diego County about five miles from the border. A US Border Patrol agent passing by on patrol stopped and asked the CHP officer if he would like assistance, the Union-Tribune said, citing a criminal complaint.



US Vice-President Mike Pence addresses a dinner at the 2018 House & Senate Republican Member Con-ference on Jan 31, at the Greenbrier resort in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. Congressional Republicans are gathered at their annual retreat, hosted by the Congressional Institute, to discuss legislative agenda for the year. (AFP)

America

FBI challenges WH over memo: The

FBI warned Wednesday it has "grave concerns" over the accuracy of a secret Congressional memo that could depict the agency as deeply politicized, as President Donald Trump's top aide signalled the White House would allow the document's

Based on highly classified information, the four-page memo - written by Republican lawmaker Devin Nunes, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee suggests that the Justice Department and the FBI abused their power in running surveillance on a member of President Donald

Trump's election campaign in 2016. The Justice Department and the FBI have actively lobbied against its release, which has the potential to taint special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into alleged collusion between the Trump campaign and Russians, an investigation that is edging closer to the president himself.

But White House chief of staff John Kelly said Wednesday that the document could be made public soon, once White House lawyers have vetted it. (AFP)

No. 3 US diplomat quits: The US State Department's third-ranking official, **Tom** Shannon, is stepping down from his post, the department said on Thursday, becoming

dent Donald Trump took office a year ago. Shannon, who serves as under secretary of state for political affairs, is the top US career diplomat and has been a fixture among the nation's diplomatic ranks during more than 34 years of service. In a letter to department staff, Shannon, 60, said he was

the latest senior diplomat to exit since Presi-

resigning for personal reasons. State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said Shannon agreed to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's request that he stay on until his successor is named.

Nauert said Shannon had served under six presidents and 10 secretaries of state.

Clinton should have fired adviser:

Hillary Clinton says she should not have let a senior campaign adviser keep his job after a female staffer accused him of sexual harassment in 2007.

"The most important work of my life has been to support and empower women, Clinton wrote on Facebook Tuesday night "So I very much understand the guestion I'm being asked as to why I let an employee on my 2008 campaign keep his job despite his inappropriate workplace behavior. The short answer is this: If I had it to do again, I wouldn't."

Clinton said that senior campaign staff and legal counsel confirmed that the behavior by faith-based adviser Burns Strider had occurred after the woman came forward. Her campaign manager recommended that Strider be terminated, but Clinton said she instead demoted him, docked his pay, required counseling, separated him from the victim, and warned him that he'd be fired if he did it again. (AP)

IS fighter case challenges Trump: The first and only US citizen caught on

Politics

Upgrading aging transportations just tip of the iceberg

Trump infrastructure goal needs fund

WASHINGTON, Jan 31, (AFP): In his first State of the Union address, President Donald Trump called for a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure initiative to upgrade America's aging transportation networks.

But the bridge from wishes to reality begins with finding the necessary funds, a topic he did not address in the Tuesday night speech.

Built for the most part between the 1950s and 1970s, US highways, bridges, railroads, airports and other infrastructure are showing their age. Even

Trump said they were "crumbling." A third of US bridges, or 226,837, and a third of highway overpasses, 17,726, are in need of repair, according to the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA).

And the association says that is just "the tip of the iceberg."

The American Society of Civil Engineers first sounded the alarm about decaying infrastructure decades ago. In 1998, it gave US infrastructure a "D" grade and put the total cost of investing in modernization at \$2 trillion over 10 years.

In 2007, a bridge over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, Minnesota collapsed killing 13 people, and federal investigators found the structure was not designed to handle the increased use it was seeing as a major commuter route into the city.

Former President Barack Obama pushed for years for Congress to fund a rebuilding program to address the problems and create jobs but Republicans blocked the effort almost entirely.

In his address, Trump called on Congress to act but gave few details. He claimed that winning regulatory approvals to build a road could take as much as a decade, whereas New York's 102-story Empire State Build-

ing was completed in about a year. "This is not a plan, this is a number," said Jacob Kirkegaard, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International **Economics**

He noted that the Trump administration has promised for months to release a detailed proposal.

So far, the White House says it favors a public-private partnership. Trump's budget proposal last year included \$200 billion for infrastructure, in the hopes of generating a total of a \$1 trillion from private investors as well as state and local governments.

"I think this is a completely unrealistic aspiration," Kirkegaard told AFP. "An aspiration is not a plan."

Lawmakers seem unlikely to approve funding, especially given that massive tax cuts approved in December already have ballooned budget deficit forecasts.

Other, less politically palatable options could involve charging tolls on roads and bridges — something many US states already do - or raising the federal gasoline tax, which has long been used for road projects but has not changed since 1993.

The choice of what to build and where also will have to break with the tradition of "pork barrel" spending which funds infrastructure projects to Raise debt ceiling: Mnuchin

Pence touts tax cuts

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, West Virginia, Feb 1, (Agencies): Vice-President Mike Pence paid a visit Wednesday to a truck dealership in West Virginia, touting the tax cuts enacted by the Republican-controlled Congress while slamming the state's Democratic Sen Joe Manchin, who

voted against the plan.

Manchin faces re-election this year.

Pence praised Republican Rep Evan Jenkins, who attended the speech, for voting for the tax bill. Jenkins is running for Manchin's seat.

"People of the Mountain State, you deserve to know, when it came to cut-ting your taxes, Joe voted no," Pence told employees of Worldwide Equipment Inc. "Joe voted no to giving working families more earned money. Joe voted no on tax cuts for job creators.'

"But it's not just the tax cuts. Sen Joe Manchin has voted no time and again on the policies that West Virginia needs," Pence added. He cited the Democrat's votes against defunding Planned Parenthood and repealing former president Barack Obama's healthcare overhaul, as well as his stated opposition to building a wall along the border with Mexico.

"Folks, Joe is just going to keep voting against West Virginia," Pence said. "But West Virginia needs to let

Manchin responded with a statement saying, "The Vice-President's comments are exactly why Washington Sucks."

"I am shocked that after the Vice-President worked for almost a year in a divisive and partisan way to take healthcare away from almost 200,000 West Virginians, bankrupt our hospitals, and push tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans and huge corporations that he would come to West Virginia and continue his partisan attacks, Manchin said. He noted that President Donald Trump called for "unity and bipartisanship" in his State of the

Union speech Tuesday.
Pence, speaking from a podium in a garage at Worldwide Equipment, said cuts in taxes and federal regulations prompted CEO Terry Dotson to give bonuses to all the company's 1,100 employees and move ahead with plans for a new dealership in Charleston, South Carolina.

The \$300 bonuses were paid in December when the tax bill was signed, Dotson said. The biggest benefit in the bill was the cut in the corporate income tax rate, he said, which went from 35 to 21 percent.

Also:

WASHINGTON: US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Wednesday called on the Republican-controlled Congress to lift the federal debt limit "as soon as possible" so the government can pay employee benefits and other obligations

In a letter to congressional leaders and key committee chairmen, Mnuchin said the Treasury Department would continue to suspend payments into federal employee retiree, health and disability funds through

debt ceiling to avoid a government default. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the US Treasury would exhaust its borrowing options and could run out of funds to pay its bills by late March if lawmakers do not act. The Congressional Budget Office

on Wednesday moved up its projection for when the Treasury will likely run out of cash to the first half of March, citing lower government revenues after the Republican overhaul of the US tax system in December.

The CBO had previously expected Treasury to exhaust its options in late March or early April.

The request comes as Congress is already wrestling with federal spending for the current fiscal year and faces the possibility of another government shutdown, with approved funding due to run out on Feb 8.

Thanks to deep partisan political divisions and intraparty squabbles, lawmakers have passed a series of shortterm funding bills since the fiscal year that began last Oct 1, but have been unable to agree on spending for the rest of that year, which ends Sept 30. The federal government shutdown earlier this month for three days when Republicans and Democrats failed to find common ground.

In his letter dated Jan 30, Mnuchin urged members of the US Senate and House of Representatives "to protect the full faith and credit of the United States by acting to increase the statutory debt limit as soon as possible. The request was released publicly on Wednesday, and Mnuchin is scheduled to meet with Republican President Donald Trump later in the day.

help political allies, eager to unveil a new road or bridge in their districts.

Different types of infrastructure projects have distinct funding models. Airports are handled by private investors, and the US Interstate Highway System was built by the federal government although its upkeep is mainly a responsibility for states, while county governments are responsible for smaller local roads.

'The nearly 48,000-mile (77,249kms) Interstate Highway System literally moves the US economy. It carries 75 percent of the nation's heavy truck traffic," according to ARTBA.

And traffic bottlenecks cost the trucking industry \$60 billion annually in fuel and lost productivity, which 'increases the cost of everything we make, buy or export,"ARTBA's chief economist Alison Premo Black said in a statement this week.

Senior White House economic adviser Gary Cohn said this week there was broad consensus on the need to address aging US infrastructure.

"I think we all know how important infrastructure is to this country and how it is holding back economic growth and it's holding back productivity," he said.

the battlefield allegedly fighting for the Islamic State is in a legal limbo, held in Iraq without rights as Washington grapples with his fate.

Identified in court papers as "John Doe," the man has been held for nearly five months, the military allowing him access to legal advice only after being forced to do so by a federal judge in Washington DC.

He was born in the United States but also has Saudi nationality, and the government has maintained the right to transfer





him to another country, presumably Saudi

It would be one way — highly illegal according to rights lawyers - to handle a fundamental dilemma for President Donald Trump, a test case challenging his pledge to be tough on any captured Islamic State supporters and his commitment to US law.

Between 100 to 200 US nationals traveled to Syria and Iraq after 2010 to work and fight in their ranks, according to various estimates. (AFP)

Europe

Polish senate OKs Holocaust bill

Russia kils IS member plotting election attack

MOSCOW, Feb 1, (Agencies): Russia's FSB security agency said Thursday it had killed an Islamic State jihadist in the provincial city of Nizhny Novgorod as he was plotting an attack during next month's presidential polls.

The FSB said the man "was ready to carry out a sabotage and terrorist attack on the day of presidential elections" on March 18 when **Vladimir Putin** is expected to win a fourth Kremlin term.

The man resisted arrest and was "neutralised," the FSB said in a statement, while state television showed footage of the man's dead body lying in what appears to be a garage scattered with hub caps and boxes.

Security forces said they found a powerful homemade explosive device as well as firearms and ammunition during the raid in the large industrial city around 400 kms (250 miles)



ic State (IS) was killed by police in the same city in October 2016, the extremist group said. In that incident, police shot

dead two armed men in a car in an operation in which two police officers were injured. IS said they were attacking a military base, but claimed only one of the pair was a member.

IS has claimed responsibility for several attacks in Russia after Moscow angered jihadists with its military intervention in Syria on the side of President Bashar al-Assad.

Most recently the group said it was responsible for a bomb attack in a supermarket in the northwestern city of Saint Petersburg in December that injured 18

Russian jails Navalny associates: Russian courts on Wednesday sentenced two spokespeople and a regional campaigner of opposition leader Alexei Navalny to jail time after nationwide protests at the week-

Kira Yarmysh and Ruslan Shaveddinov were outside Russia when they hosted the YouTube live coverage of the rallies called by Navalny on Sunday.

They were held by police on Tuesday as they flew into a Moscow airport.

Yarmysh tweeted from Moscow's Simonovsky District Court that Shaveddinov was sentenced to eight days behind bars on an administrative charge of holding an unsanctioned rally.

Yarmysh was herself sentenced to five days in jail.

Russian security boss meets Bouteflika: Russian Security Council secretary Nikolai Patrushev has met Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and heads of local secret services in Algiers, Russian government

newspaper Rossiskaya Gazeta reported on Thursday. Patrushev, former director of the Russian Federal Security Service, discussed security in northern Africa and "bilateral cooperation in information security

sphere" with Bouteflika, it said. It was unclear when Patrushev's two-day visit took

Holocaust bill slammed by Israel: Poland's senate on Thursday passed a controversial Holocaust bill, which was designed to defend the country's image abroad but has instead sparked a diplomatic row with

The bill, which sets fines or a maximum three-year jail term for anyone who refers to Nazi German death camps as Polish or accuses Poland of complicity in the Third Reich's crimes, was approved by 57 votes to 23 in the upper house of parliament, with two ab-

Israel had earlier called for the bill to be dropped, seeing one of its provisions as an attempt to deny Polish involvement in Nazi Germany's extermination of

"We have no tolerance for the distortion of the truth and rewriting history or denying the Holocaust," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sun-

day.

The lower house of parliament, which like the senate is controlled by the governing right-wing Law and Justice (PiS) party, had passed the bill on Friday triggering the protest from abroad.

Knesset lawmakers penned a proposed bill of their own Wednesday amending Israel's law regarding Holocaust denial, so that diminishing or denying the role of those who aided the Nazis in crimes against Jews would be punishable with jail.

Uzbek leader sacks security boss: Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev consolidated his power on Wednesday by sacking veteran security boss Rustam Inoyatov, who had been regarded as the second most influential official in the Central Asian nation after the president himself.

The move cements Mirziyoyev's position as an uncontested ruler of the most populous nation in the ex-Soviet region where presidents-for-life are a norm and institutions such as courts and parliaments are under the executive's thumb.

It may also allow Mirziyoyev to push through economic and administrative reforms more quickly diplomatic sources have told Reuters that Înoyatov's resistance had been slowing down moves such as foreign exchange liberalisation.

Luxury holidays spark scandal in Ukraine: Luxury holidays enjoyed or planned by Ukraine's President and Prosecutor General revealed by media have sparked uproar in a country battling large-scale corruption — though the latter played down the claims

Soon after the New Year, President Petro Poroshenko and ten other people including friends and family went on a secret seven-day vacation on a private island in the Maldives, spending some \$500,000 (400,000 euros), Ukrainian investigative TV show Skhemy reported on Jan 18.

On Tuesday, the same show revealed an expensive family vacation for Ukraine's Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko in the Seychelles, estimating the cost at more than 52,000 euros for three people.

Poroshenko's press-office told a Ukrainian news agency after news of his pricy break first emerged that he had enjoyed "a short rest" and he "paid for the trip himself from his own account" which he would be listing in his earnings and expenditure submission. Lutsenko responded Wednesday on his Facebook



Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, talks to pupils at Matteus school in Stockholm, Sweden, on Jan 31. The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are on a 4-day visit to Sweden and Norway. (AFP)



Re-elected President Sauli Niinistö listens to the speech by Speaker of Parliament Maria Lohela during the inauguration ceremony of President of the Republic of Finland during a plenary session of the Finnish Parliament in Helsinki on Feb President Niinisto was re-elected on Jan 28, for a second six-year term. (AFP)





Europe

German parties agree on climate: Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives

agreed on climate targets for 2030 with their would-be Social Democrat (SPD) partners, who also announced steady progress on European policy in coalition talks which they aim to conclude within a week.

Merkel, weakened after losing votes to the far-right in a September election, is pinning her hopes for a fourth term on a re-run of the 'grand coalition' with the SPD to end four months of political limbo in Europe's biggest economy.

After a breakthrough on the contentious issue of family reunions for migrants on Tuesday — although it was overshadowed by a subsequent row over the details — the parties ticked off other, less tricky, issues including climate policy. (RTRS)

German extends reunification rules:

German lawmakers approved a measure Thursday extending current rules limiting migrants' rights to bring close relatives to the country, paving the way for a new plan agreed to in coalition talks between Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative Union bloc and the center-left Social Democrats to take effect in the summer.

Lawmakers voted 678 to 376 to approve the measure proposed by Merkel's bloc, which extends through July the current temporary ban on relatives joining migrants whose status in Germany is below full asylum.

The suspension of family reunification rules for persons only entitled to so-called "subsidiary protection" was instituted in early 2016, after Germany was overwhelmed with the arrival of 890,000 asylum seekers the year before.

Railway loses appeal: France's national rail operator on Wednesday lost its appeal against a finding that it discriminated against hundreds of Moroccan workers

A court had in 2015 ordered rail company SNCF to pay more than 170 million euros (\$212 million) in damages to more than 800 former staff, most of whom arrived in the 1970s from a newly independent Morocco.

arriving in the post-colonial era, damaging

The SNCF sought to overturn the decision, but the main appeals court in Paris ruled Wednesday that the 848 men had indeed suffered decades of discrimination that meant their careers ended up going nowhere.

French people from immigrant backgrounds have long complained about discrimination in the workplace, and President **Emmanuel Macron** has pledged to penalise companies found to discriminate in terms of hiring or promotion.

The total sum of the new compensation package for the Moroccans was not yet available. (AFP)



Britain

MPs vote to move out of Westminster for repairs

UK, EU set to clash over citizenship rights

WUHAN, China, Feb 1, (Agencies): Prime Minister Theresa May has warned that European Union citizens arriving in Britain after Brexit next year may lose some rights, setting up a clash with the EU over their treatment during any transition period.

Curbing immigration was a key reason Britons voted to leave the EU in 2016, following a large influx of EU citizens, especially from poorer countries in eastern Europe.

The European Union has offered Britain a status quo transition until the end of 2020 after Brexit. The bloc wants its three million citizens in Britain to remain eligible for all the same rights until the end of that period.

But May has suggested EU citizens coming to Britain after March next year will be treated differently.

"People who had come to the UK when we were a member of the EU had set up certain expectations," she told reporters on her way to a Chinese

"I'm clear there's a difference between those people who came prior to us leaving and those who will come when they know the UK is no longer a member of the EU A spokesman later said EU citizens

would get the same rights during a transition phase, when Britain would set up a new registration scheme. But there must be a change after that period ends for those who arrived during the transition, he added. The issue is one obstacle Britain and

the EU will need to resolve to reach a transitional deal, which will give the two sides time to prepare for the farreaching impact of the end of 46 years of union.

Philippe Lamberts, a European lawmaker who deals with Brexit, told Reuters on Thursday: "Citizens' rights will be a negotiation point and we want to stand firm on this - that new provisions only enter into force after the end of the transition period.'

British MPs on Wednesday voted in favour of moving out of their historic Westminster home, to make way for major renovation work of the iconic Houses of Parliament.

Lawmakers backed the decision for a "full and timely decant" of parliament by 234 votes to 185, paving the way for a multi-billion-pound revamp of the dilapidated complex.

'This debate arguably should have taken place about 40 years ago," said House of Commons leader Andrea **Leadsom** at the start of the debate.

'The Palace of Westminster is the seat of our democracy, an iconic

100 years on, real women's equality still elusive: study gism and groups such as the recent

harassment.

she said.

LONDON, Feb 1, (AFP): A century after women won the right to vote in Britain, the ideals of equality are resonating again in the global wave of sexual harassment allegations seen in recent months, a leading academic told AFP

"In both cases, it's a discussion of equality," Myriam Boussahba-Bravard, a professor of women's history and gender studies at Paris Diderot University, said ahead of the Feb 6 anniversary.

"The right to vote gave formal equality... But the question now is real equality," Boussahba-Bravard said, adding: "The Suffragettes... know this."

knew this." "They too were confronted with sexual harassment, particularly at their demonstrations. Except that at the time that was not their priority be-

cause formal equality was not there yet," the academic said. Scores of women came forward in October last year to accuse US movie mogul Harvey Weinstein of harassment and abuse, sparking a chain reaction of denunciations in the world of

entertainment and far beyond. "Women have always ȟad a voice.. but perhaps it is being heard for the first time... by other women but also by many men," Boussahba-Bravard, editor of "Suffrage Outside Suffragism: Women's Vote in Britain, 1880-

The academic said there was "common ground" between Suffra-

difference between formal equality and real equality. For the future, Boussahba-Bravard said tackling workplace harassment 1914", told AFP. would be a good start but there

world-famous building and it is in dire need of repair," she added.

Much of the Palace dates from the mid-1800s, while Westminster Hall was built in 1099.

The complex is part of the UNESCO Westminster World Heritage Site and includes the Houses of Parliament and the clock tower housing Big Ben, which is already undergoing work.

Conditions are considered dire, with a Commons committee listing fire, sewage inundation and electrical failure among possible risks if urgent repairs are not carried out. "The risk of a catastrophic failure is high and growing with every month that passes," the committee said in a March report.

Britain is to move its embassy in Bangkok after the record £420 million (\$596 million) sale of its current premises in the Thai capital, the UK's foreign ministry announced Wednesday.

The sale of the embassy in Bang-

kok's Lumpini neighbourhood was the foreign ministry's biggest ever such deal and the biggest land deal in Thai history, according to the ministry.

should also be a wider emphasis on

#MeToo movement against sexual

now done via internet. At the time, it was associations communicating with

"Membership was possible for all women and from all social classes,"

which helped in building momentum

Boussahba-Bravard said that novements such as #MeToo in the

United States or #balancetonporc ("expose your pig") in France had attained "a snowball effect suffi-

ciently large that it can no longer be

ing out gives ordinary women the courage to speak out, she said, de-

scribing this new trend as "liberating"

harassment.... They are not just vic-

tims, they are also agents of change.

'We are discriminated against but we

changing among men, particularly who would have previously dismissed

"feminist" argumėnts.

She said attitudes were also

"It shows them that there is still a

The fact that celebrities are speak-

"It helps women who are victims of

each other and building numbers.

"It's a question of network, which is

The 1920s building was purchased by property firm Hongkong Land and Thai conglomerate Central Group.

Embassy staff are due to relocate to the AIA Sathorn Tower by the end of the year.

A man believed to be the British military's top agent in the Irish Republican Army (IRA) codenamed Stakeknife" has been arrested for suspected murders and kidnappings, British media reported on Wednesday.

The man has been named in media reports as 72-year-old Freddie Scappaticci and the Belfast Telegraph said his arrest would make his former paramilitary comrades and British intelligence agents "distinctly uneasy"

Scappaticci has vehemently denied being Stakeknife.

3 jailed Catalan leaders appeal:

Three Catalan leaders imprisoned in Spain over their role in their region's independence crisis will take their case to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. their lawyers in London said on Thursday.

"Their detention by Spain is an affront to human rights, designed to prevent them from performing their role as political representatives of the Catalan people," lawyer Ben Emmerson told reporters.

The three include deposed Catalan vice-president Oriol Junqueras, as well



as the leaders of two grassroots separatist groups: Jordi Sanchez of the ANC and Jordi Cuixart of Omnium Cultural. Sanchez and

Cuixart are being investigated for sedition. Junqueras is also in custody pending a probe into his role in the region's

the UN to adjudicate on the issue of Catalan independence but seeks the UN's reaffirmation that governments cannot repress political dissent through arbitrary detention,"

"Spain must release these men." (AFP)



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World News Roundup

Asia

New charges against Park

Japan fire kills 11 at home for the elderly

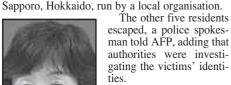
TOKYO, Feb 1, (Agencies): Eleven people were killed in northern Japan after fire broke out at a home for elderly people with financial difficulties, police said on Thursday.

ties, police said on Thursday.

Television footage showed the three-storey building engulfed in flames and dozens of fire-fighters battling the blaze in snowy conditions.

Pictures of the aftermath showed the blackened husk of the building, whose roof had apparently collapsed due to the fire.

The victims — eight men and three women — were among 16 residents of the facility in Sappers Heldridge run by a local examination



Kenji Kikai, a local police official under Hokkaido governor **Harumi Takahashi**, told AFP: "Of the five people who escaped, three people

woman — two men and one woman — were rushed to hospital. The two men were slightly injured and the woman sustained moderate injuries.

"They are still hospitalised but the injuries are not life-threatening," added Kikai.

Two others escaped unharmed.

Police said they had launched a probe into the cause of the fire first alerted at 11:42 pm (1442 GMT) Wednesday via an emergency call.

The accommodation was originally a Japanese inn built around 50 years ago that was later turned into a welfare home.

The facility is aimed at supporting elderly people with financial difficulties by offering low-cost accommodation and helping them find work, public broadcaster NHK reported.

It is usually unstaffed overnight, according to local media.

As dawn broke, police and firefighters were

combing the blackened remains of furniture in freezing temperatures.

"As there were many oil tanks (for kerosene stoves) there, I heard a number of small explo-

sions," a 67-year-old woman in the neighbourhood told Jiji Press. "Luckily, the only damage to our house was some cracks on the window," she was quoted as

Another woman in the neighbourhood, 65, said when she spotted smoke and flames while she was watching the total lunar eclipse from the window of her house, Jiji Press said.

Second Taiwanese questioned: A second Taiwanese businessman has been questioned over his alleged involvement in selling oil to North Korea, prosecutors said Thursday, as their probe into the illicit sanctions-busting trade widens.

The UN Security Council imposed three sets of sanctions on North Korea last year in response to the reclusive state's nuclear and missile tests, including restrictions on oil sales.

But the US has said companies with ties across Asia were violating those sanctions, including by transferring oil to North Korean vessels at sea to avoid detection.

The latest man to be questioned, identified only by his family name Chuang, owns a ship suspected of transferring oil products to North Korea in the East China Sea, the Kaohsiung district prosecutor's office in southern Taiwan said.

□ □ □ □ je laid against S.Korea |

New charge laid against S.Korea leader: South Korean prosecutors on Thursday added a fresh charge of illegal election activity to the indictment against ousted former president Park Geun-Hye, taking the number of accusations she faces to 21.

Park is being held in custody as her corruption trial — which began last May — proceeds.

The charges against her over the massive polit-

The charges against her over the massive political scandal that sparked nationwide fury and culminated in her impeachment range from bribery to abuse of power.

She is accused of offering policy favours to a number of business tycoons — including Samsung heir Lee Jae-Yong — who helped enrich her secret confidante, Choi Soon-Sil.

Park is also accused of letting Choi, a daughter of a shady late religious figure with whom Park was close for decades, handle many key state affairs despite Choi having no title or security clearance.

Cha dropped for US envoy to Seoul: The US ambassadorship to South Korea is set to stay open a while longer after the Trump administration dropped from consideration a prominent Washington-based academic who had been tapped for the job. The high-profile position has remained vacant for the past year as tensions with nuclear-armed North Korea have soared.

US officials confirmed the withdrawal of Victor Cha, but did not spell out the reasons for it and who might be in the running to take his place

The Washington Post reported Tuesday that Cha had privately expressed disagreement in late December with the Trump administration's policy on North Korea and on a US-South Korea trade pact that Trump has threatened to scrap. The report also cited anonymous sources as saying there had been a problem with Cha's security clearance.

WWII bomb defused in Hong Kong: A wartime bomb was defused in Hong Kong on Thursday after forcing a busy commercial district into lockdown, with roads closed and thousands evacuated from surrounding shops, hotels and

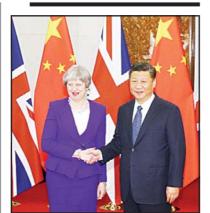
It was the second time within a week that an American bomb dropped during WWII had been discovered at a harbourfront construction site in Wan Chai.

Wan Chai.

Police sealed off parts of the district after a worker found the device on Wednesday morning, with 4,000 people evacuated and ferry services across Victoria Harbour suspended as bomb disposal experts worked through the night.



Firefighters work at the scene of a fire in Sapporo, northern Japan on Feb 1, 2018. Japanese media say 11 people have died in a fire that engulfed a home for elderly welfare recipients in northern Japan. The fire broke out before midnight Thursday in Sapporo, the main city on the island of Hokkaido. (AP)



Chinese President Xi Jinping (right), shakes hands with Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May (left), ahead of their meeting at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing on Feb 1, 2018. Hounded by Brexit rows at home, May met President Xi on Feb 1 to forge deeper trade ties after Britain leaves the EU. (AFP)

Asia

Philippine guerrilla chief held: A

senior Maoist guerrilla leader was arrested on the streets of Manila, Philippine security forces said Thursday, in the first swoop on the rebel leadership since President Rodrigo Duterte ended peace talks.

Police said Rafael Baylosis and another armed man were detained in the capital on Wednesday after a tip-off in a joint operation with military intelligence.

Baylosis headed the Communist Party of the Philippines during the 1980s peak of the insurgency to overthrow a capitalist system that has created one of Asia's biggest rich-poor divides.

Police described the 69-year-old as the "acting secretary" of the Maoist party's guerilla wing, the New People's Army (NPA), which the military says has shrunk

Diplomacy

China expected to be UK's biggest foreign investor by 2020

May, Xi meet focuses on post-Brexit

BEIJING, Feb 1, (Agencies): British Prime Minister Theresa May met Thursday with Chinese President Xi Jinping on a visit aimed at mapping out new trading arrangements following Britain's departure from the European Union.

The meeting at the Great Hall of the

People in Beijing came a day after May called for expanding the "global strategic partnership" between the two countries.

May said business deals worth more than 9 billion pounds (\$13 billion) will

Bolstering ties with China became more urgent after Britain voted in 2016 to leave the EU, compelling it to forge new trade agreements outside of the

be announced before her visit ends

28-nation bloc.

British exports to China are up 60 percent since 2010, and China is expected to be one of the UK's biggest foreign investors by 2020.

May is being accompanied on her visit by 50 British business leaders, including the chief executives of Jaguar Land Rover and drug firm AstraZeneca. She will also visit the financial hub of Shanghai before returning home.

British finance minister Philip Hammond visited in December, pledging to promote London as a center for transactions in China's yuan currency and announcing up to 25 billion pounds (\$35 billion) in support for British businesses involved in the "Belt and Road" initiative, China's mega-plan for trade and infrastructure links across Asia.

But May appears more cautious about embracing Chinese investment than her predecessor, David Cameron. She annoyed Beijing in 2016 by temporarily delaying approval for a Chinese-backed nuclear power plant in southwestern England.

May has also been hesitant to endorse the Belt and Road initiative, although

on Wednesday she expressed conditional support for British involvement as long as such projects adhere to established global business practices.

May has also echoed China's refer-

ence to a "golden era" in relations proclaimed in 2015 by Xi and David Cameron, her predecessor as prime minister.

As she visits China, May's job is

under threat from rivals within her Conservative Party, who are divided over whether to make a clean break with the EU or seek to keep the closestpossible economic relationship.

May insisted to reporters flying with her to China, "I'm not a quitter."

There is "a long-term job to be done" by her government, she said, according to the Press Association news agency.

Brexit appeared to figure prominently in the talks and May said that as Britain prepares to leave the EU "we are committed to deepening our strong and vital partnership" with China.

to 3,800 members from a high of more than 20,000. (AFP)

Aussie spy agency secures docus: Australia's domestic spy agency on Thursday took possession of thousands of classified documents that were left at a second-hand furniture shop as the government struggles to contain an embarrassing securiThe documents, which revealed top-secret details of five previous governments that under Australian law should remain secured for at least 20 years, were left inside a filing cabinet that was then sold at a store in Canberra that was stocked with ex-government furniture. (RTRS)

Petrol bomb hits Suu Kyi villa: A

man threw a petrol bomb at the lakeside

Yangon compound of Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi on Thursday, officials said, a rare attack on a national figurehead who enjoys strong domestic support but has drawn global outcry over her reticence to speak up for the Rohingya.

There was little damage caused by the attack, Kyi Toe, an official from her National League for Democracy (NLD) party wrote in a Facebook posting. (AFP)



Subcontinent

Mass graves found in Myanmar

Attackers trained in Pakistan: Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan, Feb 1, (Agencies): Afghanistan has given neighboring Pakistan confessions and other proof that the militants who carried out a recent series of attacks were trained in Pakistan and that Taleban leaders there are allowed to roam freely, the Af-

ghan interior minister said Thursday. Wais Ahmed Barmak told news conference

the evi-

dence was presented at a meeting a

day earlier in the Pakistani capital, Islamabad. Afghanistan's spy chief, Masoom Stanekzai, also attended the meeting, along with senior Pakistani military and intelligence officials

Stanekzai, addressing the same news conference, said Afghanistan laid out its proof and asked Pakistan to take action to prevent further attacks. There was no immediate comment from Pakistan, which has expressed condolences over the recent attacks. A Pakistani delegation is due in Kabul on Saturday. Nearly 200 people have been killed over the past month in attacks claimed by the Taleban and a rival Islamic State affiliate. Afghan authorities say they detained one of the gunmen who attacked a military academy on Monday, killing 11 people in an assault claimed

Refugees stay extended: Pakistan's government has extended the stay of Afghan refugees in the country for 60 days, a shorter-than-recommended time that revives fears Islamabad is preparing a forced return of hundreds of thousands to violence-plagued Af-

About 2.5 million Afghans live in Pakistan, home to the world's

For years, the refugees, some of whom have been living in Pakistan since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, received longerterm extensions of up to a year of the Proof of Registration cards that give them legal status.

second-largest refugee population.

Reporters bail rejected: A district court in Myanmar rejected bail on Thursday for two Reuters journalists accused of violating the country's colonial-era Official Se-

crets Act. In proceedings, a lawyer for the two journalists told the court that documents police said were found in their possession when they were arrested contained information that was publicly available in newspaper reports.

Wa Lone, 31, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 27, had worked on Reuters coverage of a crisis in Rakhine state, where an army crackdown on insurgents that started on Aug 25 has triggered the flight of nearly 690,000 Rohingya Muslims to neighbouring Bangladesh, according to the United Nations.

Mass graves found: The faces of the men half-buried in the mass graves had been burned away by acid or blasted by bullets. Noor Kadir finally recognized his friends

only by the colors of their shorts.

Kadir and 14 others, all Rohingya Muslims in the Myanmar village of Gu Dar Pyin, had been choosing players for the soccerlike game of chinlone when the gunfire began. They scattered from what sounded like hard rain on a tin roof. By the time the Myanmar military stopped shooting, only Kadir and two teammates were left

Days later, Kadir found six of his friends among the bodies in

Lenovo

Tab4



Pupils write on their notebook as they attend class at a primary school in Pikine, on the outskirts of Dakar, on Jan 30. Education is a challenge in Senegal, and Dakar hosts from Feb 1, the third conference of reconstitution of funds of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The next day several heads of state, including the French president, sponsor of the meeting and Senegalese president. (AFP)

Africa

Eritrea slams Israel: In a rare interview, Eritrea's president has expressed his displeasure with Israel's plan to deport tens of thousands of African migrants, saying they deserve far more than the \$3,500 they were offered to

President Isaias Afwerki's interview on a government website Wednesday said the migrants from his country and Sudan paid a "high price" to human traffickers to reach Israel and

deserve more like \$50,000. "They need fair compensation to start a new life in their home country,' Afwerki said in the interview with local media. He said all those who wish to return home "have every right to do so," and that Eritrea has offered to register all of its roughly 20,000 migrants but Israeli authorities had refused.

Many Eritreans leaving the east African nation claim they fled a restrictive regime under Afwerki, where men are often forced into a military service with slavery-like conditions. They say they cannot return. In the interview, Afwerki claimed instead that the Eritrean migrants were enticed abroad to organize an armed opposition but that the "subversive schemes" failed and the migrants now have become a burden. (AP)

Mali mayor kidnapped: A missing mayor in northern Mali was "kidnapped by armed men", his family and a security source said Wednesday, as the nation's most powerful jihadist group claimed a string of attacks last

Baba Ould Cheikh, the mayor of Tarkint in the Gao region, was snatched by six armed men between Jan 21 and 23, a member of his family told AFP, underlining increasing insecurity months ahead of a presidential

Cheikh had negotiated the release of Europeans kidnapped by jihadists in the past, and is the latest victim of either criminal elements or jihadists who frequently organise such kidnappings.

"There is no doubt he was taken away. He didn't just disappear. Either the kidnapping was done by people he had a disagreement with, or Islamists who organised it," the security source

Nigeria violence kills 14:

Suspected reprisal attacks between herdsmen and farmers killed at least 14 people in central Nigeria, police said on Wednesday, the latest violence of an escalating conflict. Amnesty International said on Tues-

day that 168 people have been killed in communal violence this year alone, warning it is "spiralling" out of control and heaping pressure on President Muhammadu Buhari to act.

In central Nigeria's Nasarawa state, gunmen suspected of being cattle herders killed at least seven farmers.

Nasarawa police spokesman Idrisu Kennedy said armed men stormed







tion" on the Communist-run island that has one of the lowest

the farming village of Kadarko in the

and opened fire on residents.

said. (AFP)

cally. (AFP)

Keana district of the state on Tuesday

"We received report of an attack

on (an ethnic) Tiv neighbourhood in

Kadarko by unknown gunmen who

Nigeria bomb kills 4: A sui-

cide bomber killed four people late

Wednesday in an attack on a camp

violence in the northeast Nigeria,

emergency services told AFP.

for people displaced by Boko Haram

The bomber scaled the rear fence of

an internally displaced persons (IDP)

camp on the outskirts of the city Mai-

duguri and detonated his explosives

in the crowd, said Garba Idris Garga,

head of Nigeria's emergency management agency (NEMA) in the northeast.

"He blew himself up among tents

housing the IDPs," Garga said, adding

that 44 people were injured, some criti-

Sudan asked to free protesters:

European embassies in Sudan made a

joint plea Wednesday for Khartoum

opposition leaders and human rights

"We condemn the violence used

against peaceful protest, and continue

to encourage those exercising their

fundamental rights to do so peaceful-

ly," the embassies of European Union

'The ambassadors of the resident

concerned by the prolonged detention

without charge or trial of a large num-

ber of political leaders, human rights

activists and other citizens." (AFP)

member states said in a statement.

EU embassies in Sudan are very

to free dozens of people, including

activists, detained while protesting

against high food prices.

opened fire, killing seven people," he

The group would examine ways of "expanding internet access

activities.

promote "the free and unregulated

flow of informa-

internet penetra-

tion rates in the

world.

Lat/Am

Cuba protests over US Net: Cuba handed a note of protest to the top US diplomat in Havana on Wednes-

day over the Trump administration's creation of a Cuba Internet Task Force

that it said was an attempt to violate its sovereignty and carry out subversive

The US State Department said last week it was convening the task force to

and independent media", it said. "The Foreign Ministry's note asked the US government to cease its subversive, interventionist and illegal actions against Cuba ... and calls upon it to respect Cuban sovereignty," the

ministry said in a statement. "Once again, the US Government tries to justify the reinforcement of its unjust, illegal and universally rejected blockade policy versus Cuba with disrespectful language," Cuba's Foreign Ministry chief for US Affairs Josefina Vidal wrote on her twitter account. (RTRS)

Venezuela rejects border plan: Venezuela has rejected a United Nations proposal to send its longstanding border dispute with neighboring Guyana to an international court.

Foreign Affairs Minister Jorge Arreaza said Wednesday that his country will push for a diplomatic settlement spelled out in a 1966 agreement signed in Geneva.

His comment comes a day after UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced that he is sending the case to the International Court of Justice.

UN officials cite a provision of the Geneva accord that gives the secretarygeneral authority to find a solution if the two countries can't. (AP)

Venezuela talks advance: Talks between Venezuela's government and the country's political opposition are advancing, though no concrete agreement has yet been made, according to spokespeople from each side.

Few are expecting much from the talks, which are being held in the Dominican Republic. The government and the opposition have been in on-off talks for years to reach an agreement to ease the deep political and economic crisis in the oil-rich country. (RTRS)

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THE COMMUTER















World News Roundup

Environment

Groups sue to block road

US 'considers' robots to combat mine spills

DENVER, Feb 1, (AP): Crumbling mine tunnels awash with polluted waters perforate the Colorado mountains, and scientists may one day send robots creeping through the pitch-black passages to study the mysterious currents that sometimes burst to the surface with devastating effects.

One such disaster happened at the inactive Gold King Mine in southwestern Colorado in 2015, when the Environmental Protection Agency accidentally triggered the release of 3 million gallons (11 million liters) of mustard-colored water laden with arsenic, lead and other contaminants. The spill tainted rivers in three states.

Now, the EPA is considering using robots and other sophisticated technology to help prevent these types of "blowouts" or clean them up if they happen. But first

the agency has to find out what's inside the mines, some of which date to Colorado's gold rush in the 1860s.

Wastewater containing toxic heavy metals has been spewing from hundreds of inactive mines nationwide for decades, the product of complicated and sometimes poorly understood subterranean flows.

Thomas

Mining creates tainted water in steps: Blasting out tunnels and processing ore exposes

long-buried, sulfur-bearing rocks to oxygen. The sulfur and oxygen mix with natural underground water flows to create sulfuric acid. The acidic water then leaches heavy metals out of the rocks.

To manage and treat the wastewater, the EPA needs a clear idea of what's inside the mines, some of which penetrate thousands of feet into the mountains. But many old mines are poorly documented.

many old mines are poorly documented.

Investigating with robots would be cheaper, faster and safer than humans.

Space

"You can send a robot into an area that doesn't have good air quality. You can send a robot into an area that doesn't have much space," said **Rebecca Thomas**, project manager for the EPA's newly created Gold King Superfund site, officially known as the Bonita Peak Mining District.

Instruments on the robots could map the mines and analyze pollutants in the water.

They would look more like golf carts than the personable robots from "Star Wars" movies. Hao Zhang, an assistant professor of computer science at the Colorado School of Mines, envisions a battery-powered robot about 5 feet (1.5 meters) long with wheels or tracks to get through collapsing, rubble-strewn tunnels.

Zhang and a team of students demonstrated a smaller robot in a mine west of Denver recently. It purred smoothly along flat tunnel floors but toppled over trying to pendiate a cluttered passage.

to negotiate a cluttered passage.

"The terrain is pretty rough," Zhang said. "It's hard for even humans to navigate in that environment."

A commercial robot modified to explore abandoned mines — including those swamped with acidic wastewater — could cost about \$90,000 and take three to four years to develop, Zhang said.

Significant obstacles remain, including finding a way to operate remotely while deep inside a mine, beyond the reach of radio signals. One option is dropping signal-relay devices along the way so the robot stays in touch with operators. Another is designing an autonomous robot that could find its own way.

bot that could find its own way.

Researchers also are developing sophisticated computerized maps showing mines in three dimensions.

The maps illustrate where the shafts intersect with natural faults and provide clues about how water courses through the mountains.

through the mountains.

"It really helps us understand where we have certainty and where we have a lot of uncertainty about what we think's happening in the subsurface," said Ian Bowen, an EPA hydrologist. "So it's a wonderful, wonderful

The EPA also plans to drill into mines from the surface and lower instruments into the bore holes, measuring the depth, pressure and direction of underground

Tracing the currents is a challenge because they flow through multiple mines and surface debris. Many tunnels and faults are connected, so blocking one might send water out another.

"You put your finger in the dike here, where's the water going to come out?" Thomas said.

Investigating

Once the EPA finishes investigating, it will look at technologies for cleansing the wastewater.

Options range from traditional lime neutralization — which causes the heavy metals dissolved in the water to form particles and drop out — to more unusual techniques that involve introducing microbes.

The choice has consequences for taxpayers. If no company is found financially responsible, the EPA pays the bill for about 10 years and then turns it over to the state. Colorado currently pays about \$1 million a year to operate a treatment plant at one Superfund mine. By 2028, it will pay about \$5.7 million annually to operate plants at three mines, not including anything at the Pontia Peole site.

The EPA views the Colorado project as a chance for the government and entrepreneurs to take risks and try technology that might be useful elsewhere.

But the agency — already dealing with a distrustful public and critical politicians after triggering the Gold King spill — said any technology deployed in Colorado will be tested first, and the public will have a chance to comment before decisions are made.

Also:

ANCHORAGE, Alaska: Nine environmental groups sued the **US** government Wednesday to block a land trade that could lead to construction of a road through a national wildlife refuge in Alaska that is habitat for migrating waterfowl.

The groups sued Interior Secretary **Ryan Zinke**, who signed an agreement last week to swap land in Izembek National Wildlife Refuge for private land held by an Alaska Native village corporation.

The village of King Cove wants a road through Izembek for land access to the nearby community of Cold Bay, home to an all-weather airport. The road would slice through the length of a strip of land separating lagoons used by hundreds of thousands of waterfowl.

The groups contend that Zinke lacks the authority to

swap land within a refuge established by Congress.

"Secretary Zinke has violated his most sacred responsibility to the American people," **Fran Mauer**, a retired US Fish and Wildlife Service wildlife biologist and Alaska representative of Wilderness Watch, said in the announcement of the lawsuit filed in Anchorage.



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off from Complex 41 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Jan 31, 2018 The rocket is carrying a communications satellite for the satellite company SES and the government of Luxembourg. (AP)



Britain's Prince Charles, Prince of Wales speaks during a meeting of business leaders to discuss the role of plastics in the economy in London on Jan 31. The Prince of Wales, President of the Prince's International Sustainability Unit, joined a meeting of key plastics stakeholders and business leaders to discuss the role of plastics in the economy and the steps that can be taken to prevent plastic

build up in the oceans. (AFP)

95



Rogozin

Pru

Discovery

Russia launches 11 space sats: Russia on Thursday successfully launched 11 satellites from its Vostochny cosmodrome, in the third rocket liftoff from the new spaceport, the space agency said.

The country's first orbital launch of 2018 came after a similar liftoff from the cosmodrome in eastern Russia ended in embarrassment, with officials losing contact with a string of satellites last November.

Lifting off as scheduled earlier Thursday, the Soyuz rocket carried two Russian Earth monitoring satellites as its primary payload and nine US and German piggyback satellites.

During its mission the Fregat upperstage rocket performed a complex sequence, forming several orbits for the delivery of the satellites, the Roscosmos space agency said. "In accordance with the flight pro-

"In accordance with the flight programme, the Fregat upper-stage placed into orbit space vehicles of main and secondary payloads," the space agency said in a statement. Both the Soyuz rocket and the upper stage "performed without a glitch," the statement added

Dmitry Rogozin, the deputy prime minister in charge of space, said contact with Russia's Kanopus-V earth monitoring satellites had been established.

"Thank you everyone," the official tweeted. (AFP)

Orangutan 'beheaders' defend: Two Indonesian men arrested for shooting an orangutan multiple times and then decapitating it before tossing the corpse into a river, have told investigators they acted in self-defence, police said Thursday.

The suspects, both rubber plantation workers on the island of Borneo, admitted they killed the critically endangered male Bornean orangutan whose headless body was found last month.

Its hair was burned off its body which was riddled with at least 17 bullet wounds. Pictures of the beheaded corpse floating by the riverbank quickly spread online and sparked an angry reaction from animal

rights activists, among others.
"They claimed they killed the orangutan because they were scared to see such a big animal suddenly coming their way," Cen-

Climate

Shinier cities and fields could cut extreme heat risk

CO₂ removal 'no silver bullet': experts

LONDON, Feb 1, (RTRS): Technologies to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to help tackle global warming only have limited potential and more effort should be made to reduce emissions, European scientists said in a report on Wednesday.

Proposals to use climate technologies, ranging from spraying sun-dimming chemicals high above the Earth to capturing and storing carbon dioxide underground, have been gaining more attention as the urgency to act on climate change mounts.

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement, world governments have agreed to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels but a large gap remains between countries' emissions plans and the reductions needed.

The European Academies' Science Advisory Council (EASAC), formed from national science academies of EU members, has reviewed scientific evidence about several options for removing carbon dioxide (CO2) from the atmosphere with so-called negative emission technologies.

Examples of such technologies include the direct capture of CO2 and trapping it underground (carbon capture and storage); afforestation and reforestation; land management to increase and fix carbon in soils and ocean fertilisation.

Policymakers

The EASAC, which advises European policymakers, said these technologies have "limited realistic potential to remove carbon from the atmosphere" and not at the scale in some climate forecasts, such as several gigatonnes of carbon each year after 2050.

Their deployment on a large scale would also involve high economic costs and have major impacts on terrestrial or marine ecosystems, the EASAC said in a report.

"Technologies capable of taking out CO2 from the atmosphere are certainly

no silver bullet — a point that should drive policymakers to renewed efforts to accelerate emissions reductions," the report said.

However, the world will need all

possible tools to limit warming and some of these technologies can make contributions to remove CO2 from the atmosphere even now, while further research, development and demonstration may allow others to make a lim-

ited future contribution," it added.

Commenting on the report, Andrew Watson, Royal Society Research Professor at the University of Exeter said that while some technologies for removing CO2 from the atmosphere could have a role to play in reducing climate change, all have drawbacks making them difficult to use them on a large scale.

"So our main focus and best hope for avoiding the worst effects of climate change still needs to be reducing our emissions," he added.

Last week, a leaked draft UN report said there is a high chance that the levels of CO2 removal which might be required to meet the Paris goals might not be feasible due to the required scale and speed of technology deployment.

ed of technology dep

Making cities and farm fields more reflective — including by painting buildings white or leaving more land unploughed after harvests — could reduce extreme heat by up to 3 degrees Celsius in areas where the techniques are used, scientists say.

While such measures would not lower global temperatures — which are rising as a result of climate change — such simple changes could provide substantial local or regional relief on the hottest days, according to research published this week in the journal Nature Geoscience.

"This is clipping the upper tail of extreme temperatures," said **Andy Pitman**, director of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Climate Extremes at the University of New South Wales in Australia — one of the countries struggling with blistering hot days. The measures could mean fewer

heat deaths in cities during scorching weather and fewer threats from everything from heat-warped rail lines to electrical outages from excess demand for electricity, said Pitman, one of the authors of the study.

"If you can bring the extreme temperature down a degree or two you reduce the risks. And that might mean you don't trigger the brownout — or a human health catastrophe," he said in an interview with the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Homes

Painting homes white — something common across parts of the Mediterranean, for example — is hardly a new idea to combat heat. "Italians and Greeks worked this out a thousand years ago," Pitman noted.

But as climate change brings more heat threats around the world, many other parts of the world may need to "rediscover what some countries or populations have done for a long time", he said.

New advances, such as more reflec-

New advances, such as more reflective road paving materials and roof tiles, could also help, he said.

On farms, leaving fields unploughed after harvest to increase the amount of sunshine they reflect, could also help lower local temperatures, said **Sonia Seneviratne**, the study's lead author and an expert on land and climate dynamics at ETH Zurich, a Swiss university.

Changing the types of crops planted — or developing ones designed to reflect more light from their leaves, potentially using genetic modification — also could help, she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "With the harvest happening in August in Europe, the weeks that follow often tend to have heatwaves," she said. "So in Europe this could be useful."

ld AFP.
"The investigation is still ongoing," he ded. Orangutans can grow to the size of

added. Orangutans can grow to the size of humans and have enormously powerful arms but are not known to attack unless their habitat is threatened. Investigators said they seized a machete

tral Borneo police chief Anang Revandoko

allegedly used to attack the animal, whose body was discovered by a local villager.

"The men shot the animal multiple times but (they said) it didn't die," Revandoko said. "One of them then decapitated it from behind. Then they buried its head in the backyard of their house and dumped the body in the river." (AFP)

US EPA delays water rule: The US Environmental Protection Agency said on Wednesday that the 2015 Waters of the



Ash spews from the Popocatepetl volcano as seen from the 'Nuestra Senora del Carmen' church in Puebla, Mexico, on Jan 31, 2018. According to the Interior Ministry's National Coordinator of Civil Protection, in the last 24 hours Popocatepetl's monitoring identified 160 low intensity exhalations accompanied by water vapor and gas plus three explosions. The Popocatepetl Volcanic Alert Traffic Light is in yellow Phase 2. (AFP)

United States rule will not be applicable for two years while it works to repeal and replace the Obama-era clean water regula-

EPA Administrator **Scott Pruitt** said the delay of the 2015 rule that defined which small waterways can be governed by federal regulations will "reduce confusion and provide certainty to America's farmers and ranchers."

and ranchers."

The agency is currently reviewing public comments for its 2017 proposal to rescind the rule. It is also working with the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a potential replacement rule that "would revise the

definition of waters of the United States."

The water rule has been bogged down in legal challenges. The US Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit issued a nationwide stay of the rule, halting its planned August 2015 implementation. (RTRS)

Kosovo group protests pollution: Hundreds of people staged a protest Wednesday in Kosovo's capital Pristina,

urging the government to fight extremely high pollution.

Protesters blamed the government and local authorities for allowing hazardous levels of fine particulate matter, an air pollutions.

lutant called PM2.5.

Even the policemen following the protest joined in the cause by wearing face masks.

An air quality monitor installed in the United States embassy in Pristina measured pollution in the capital's air as "very unhealthy." Pristina has severe air pollution problems due to the outdated power plants using coal, smoke from wood-burning stoves and exhaust fumes from old cars. (AP)

Gaming world's Super Mario set for leap into anime film

TOKYO, Feb 1, (Agencies): Japan's Nintendo on Thursday said it was working on an anime movie starring its iconic video game character Super Mario in collaboration with the US studio behind the "Despicable Me" series.

Shigeru Miyamoto, the renowned game creator of "Super Mario Bros" and "Donkey Kong" at the Kyoto-based video game giant, has been working with Chris Meledandri at Illumination Entertainment to produce the Mario anime.

"People have told me making games is similar to making movies and I've been flattered by people saying things like 'If you can make a game, you can make a movie'," Miyamoto told reporters in Tokyo.
"But they are totally different," said the creator who has some previ-

ous experience in directing short movies. "One is interactive and the other is a passive experience," he said, noting film-making requires film-making experts and Meledandri was

an "experienced producer." In the past decade, Meledandri has produced the "Despicable Me" series, "The Secret Life of Pets" and other box-office hits.

"I got along with him. But it took more than two years to make an announcement since we agreed to do something together," he

Miyamoto said he and Meledandri had already made progress in production though the release date is yet to be fixed.

He said they would scrap the project if they decided they were un-

able to make an "entertaining" film, he said.

Progress

"We've already discussed its script many times and have made quite a lot of progress ... between the two of us," he said.

Once done, the film will be distributed by Universal Pictures, Mi-

The announcement came the day after Nintendo posted stellar earnings thanks to strong sales of its new Switch console and software titles. Global sales of the Super Mario Odyssey title for Switch topped nine million since its launch last October.

Miyamoto told the briefing that the company's "ultimate goal" is that everyone would have a Switch console for their personal use. Nintendo also said it was planning to release a new Mario Kart title for smartphones in the year from April.

There was a Hollywood live-action film with Super Mario characters in 1993 but it scored limited success at the box office.

LOS ANGELES: China's DeZerlin Media and the UK's Zycon Media have agreed to co-finance and produce a large slate of film and TV

The agreement, signed on Thursday at the British Ambassador's residence in Beijing in the presence of the UK Prime Minister Theresa May, covers 10 feature films and 10 TV series to be made over a period of 8 years. Aggregate production value is estimated at \$160 million (RMB1 billion).

"Traditionally, intellectual property has been created in the West, and Chinese partners are then sought out for finance and production services. But with this deal, DeZerlin reverses the process, generating all of the original IP internally, and partnering with Zycon for cofinance and co-production utilizing the excellent creative and technical talent in the UK," the companies explained.

"Watch the Skies," an action fantasy about a marooned alien boy and the earth kids who rescue him, is the first title in the film slate. Under the direction of DeZerlin's chief creative officer Mark Byers, it is set for delivery in early 2019. A prominent English-language voice cast is expected to be attached. A second title, "Codename: Furball" is a WWII-set adventure set to start production in Spring this year.

Based in Qingdao and founded with the backing of Houtu Venture Capital, HG Capital, and DH Capital, DeZerlin has been in operation since 2010. It specializes in "creating broad worlds and vast universes from which characters, stories, and franchises for all media can be drawn and developed."

"DeZerlin Media is a forward-thinking company, and their philosophy of developing internal IP to reach a wider global market is refreshing to me, and makes them a true industry leader in China," said Zycon CEO Mohammed Khalid.

Variety



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Leslie Mann (from left), Ike Barinholtz and John Cena in a scene from 'Blockers' a film premiering at the 25th South by Southwest Film Festival. SXSW Film Festival will run March 9-18. (AP)

Film

It's not just another climate change movie

NEW YORK: The 25th South by 'Anote's' shows Kiribati on the brink Southwest Film Festival will kick off with John Krasinski's third directorial effort: the supernatural

thriller "A Quiet Place" The Austin, Texas, festival announced its slate Wednesday, starting with the opening selection of Krasinksi's film, his third film as director. The film, which Paramount Pictures will release in April, stars Krasinski and **Emily Blunt**, his wife, as a rural couple haunted by an evil attracted to sound. Millicent Simmonds, the

daughter. Last year, Terrence Malick's Austin-set "Song to Song" opened the festival. (AP)

breakout star of 2017's "Wonder-struck", plays the couple's deaf

PARIS: An acclaimed film about AIDS activists and a World War I epic top the nominations list for the "French Oscars", the Cesars, which were announced Wednes-

day.
"120 BPM (Beats Per Minute)", which follows the battles of a group of ACT UP activists with the French government and drugs companies in the 1990s, picked up 13 nominations including best

"Au revoir la-haut" (Goodbye Up There), a breezy post-Great War satire drawn from an awardwinning novel, picked up the same number. (AFP)

LOS ANGELES: Lionsgate and Parques Reunidos plan to open the first European Lionsgate branded indoor entertainment center in **Spain** in 2020, with attractions based on "The Hunger Games", "Divergent", and "Mad Men".

The facility will be located at the Estacion Principe Pio in Madrid. The companies' first Lionsgate Entertainment City will open in Times Square in New

York City in 2019. The companies did not disclose specifics of the attractions based on the dystopian Hunger Games and Divergent properties, in which factions are at war with each other. However, facility will include a challenge course and climbing wall, stateof-the-art motion simulator, 4D theater, and location-based VR

PARK CITY, United States, Feb 1, (Agencies): With its pristine sands, glistening saltwater flats and gently swaying palms, Kiribati ought to be a tropical paradise

— but this precarious slice of heaven on Earth is living on borrowed time. The low-lying Pacific nation of 33 atolls and reef islands is facing the unstoppable rise of the sea and will be gone before long, making its people the world's first nation of climate change refugees.

"I've been trying to communicate to the international community that we have a problem. It's a small part of the larger challenge on climate change, but our case is more immediate," former Kiribati president and climate activist Anote Tong tells AFP.

'We're at the bottom end of the spectrum, where we are the most vulnerable. We are on the front line. Before anyone else is affected, we will be."

Tong, who ruled the isolated nation for 12 years until completing his third term in 2016, is the focus of "Anote's Ark," a new film documenting the plight of Kiribati's 110,000 inhabitants and the struggle for the survival of 4,000 years of Kiribati culture.

Documentarian Matthieu Rytz follows Tong in the later years of his presidency as he travels the world pointing out that his homeland lies barely two meters (6.5 feet) above

sea level and the islets are facing an emergency. "They are most likely to be uninhabitable well within the century, before they disappear," Tong told AFP at the Sundance Film Festival in the US state of Utah,

where "Anote's Ark" had its world premiere last week. "Already we have had communities who had to relocate because the village, the community they used to have, is no longer there.

"We have communities where the seawater has broken into the freshwater pond and destroyed food crops.' "Anote's Ark" is the first feature film directed by Rytz, a Canadian photographer who was exposed to the plight of the islanders and persuaded Tong to be part of a film.

Journey

The documentary follows the statesman on his journey through international halls of power leading up to the 2015 Paris Climate Conference.

"It was an incredible story - a head of state who

knows he won't have a state within a generation," Rytz

told AFP. The filmmaker was clear from the beginning that he didn't want to make just another climate change movie following politicians or celebrities at summits around the world

Instead he weaves Tong's campaign into the wider story of the people of Kiribati, and we meet Sermery Tiare, a young mother of six who decides to relocate to

New Zealand with her family. Tong, 65, has developed a string of attention-grabbing schemes designed to help his people cope when their homeland is swamped.

Among those strategies is the construction of floating islands, anchored to the sea, that could sustain up to 30,000 people for a century.

In reality, the project — complete with skyscrapers and resort facilities — would cost hundreds of billions of dollars, and Tong understands they will not become reality anytime soon, if at all.

Other options include constructing sea walls, as well as "land reclamation" and the building of artificial islands using sand dredged from the seabed.

During his tenure, Tong bought 2,000 hectares (5,000 acres) of farmland in Fiji, a bigger Pacific Island nation, partly as an investment but also as a possible new home. He has also pioneered the concept of "migration with dignity" - training islanders mostly used to a fishing lifestyle to give them useful skills in their lives as cli-

mate change refugees. "The science is pretty categorical. It doesn't take a lot of intelligence to know that based on the projections put forward by the (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) we have a huge disaster coming up,'

Tong told AFP. "We cannot wish it away. And even if the possibility of that coming up is five percent, we cannot remain complacent.

He describes US President Donald Trump's announcement that he intended to withdraw the US from the 2015 Paris climate accord on limiting global warming as initially "extremely disappointing.

He added, however, that he was heartened by reaf-

firmations of commitment to the agreement at the state, industry and civil society level.

"Governments have a limited ability to address this because governments are led by politicians," he said. "Politicians are more concerned about the next election than the next generation."

Also:

LOS ANGELES: The Orchard has purchased North American rights to "We the Animals" following its debut at the Sundance Film Festival. The coming-of-age

story will get a theatrical release in 2018. It marks the second Sundance acquisition for The Orchard — the indie studio partnered with MoviePass for rights to "American Animals," a heist thriller with Evan Peters and Barry Keoghan. The Orchard was also in the mix for "Leave No Trace" and "Blindspotting," but other studios ultimately landed the rights to

those Sundance films. "We the Animals" won the NEXT Innovator Award at Sundance in a tie with "Night Comes On." The film focuses on three boys growing up in rural New York. Their young parents have a stormy love affair that tears their family apart and reconstitutes it over the course of the film. Two of the boys grow into versions of their erratic but kindly father, but the youngest son, Jonah, is more sensitive and artistic in temperament, and forms a closer bond with his mother.

"We the Animals" was adapted by Dan Kitrosser and Jeremiah Zagar from Justin Torres' debut novel of the same name. Critics hailed the sensitive direction of Zagar, as well as the performances of actors Evan Rosado, Isaiah Kristian and Josiah Gabriel, all of whom were first-time performers. IndieWire's Eric Kohn compared it favorably to "Moonlight," writing that it "... evokes a growing awareness of being ostracized in an indifferent life, until the ecstatic potential

for a new stage finally lands."
"With 'We the Animals,' Jeremiah has masterfully created a dream-like backdrop for a story of personal identity and family," Paul Davidson, the Orchard's EVP for film and TV, said in a statement. "It is a captivating, magnetic film that deserves to be seen in theaters and we are proud to be a part of making that happen.'

experiences. It will also contain a restaurant and lounge inspired by the one frequented by Jon Hamm's Don Draper character in "Mad Men". (RTRS)

LOS ANGELES: Michelle MacLaren has come on to direct Universal's adaptation of "Cowboy Ninja Viking" starring Chris





Based on the Image Comics graphic novel by A.J. Lieberman and illustrator **Riley Rossmo**, the pic was most recently written by Craig Mazin. The original draft was written by Zombieland writers Paul Wernick and Everett David Reese.

The film is an adaptation of the graphic novel revolving around an

assassin who manifests the toughest skills of three different personas: a cowboy, a ninja, and a viking.

Entertainment 360, the production arm of Management 360, Mark Gordon via the Mark Gordon Company, Michael De Luca for Michael De Luca Productions, and Pratt will produce. VP of production Sara Scott will oversee production on behalf of the studio.

The pic is set to be released on June 28, 2019.

The film marks yet another collaboration between Pratt and Universal, which recently wrapped production on "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom". That movie is set to open on June 22. (RTRS)

People & Places

Film

Motorbike crash

Tough guy of films Butler on yr of pain

LOS ANGELES, Feb 1, (Agencies): He has cultivated an image as a tough guy over two decades of starring in action thrillers but no role could have prepared Gerard Butler for his excruciating motorbike crash.

The 48-year-old Scot — best known as hard-as-nails Spartan leader Leonidas in 2006 action fantasy was riding in Los Angeles in October when his motorbike and a car collided, sending him somersaulting into the air.

"I fractured five bones in my right foot and had a microfracture in each foot and a pinched nerve and a bruised bone, and injured my ankle and both knees,'

The damage couldn't have come at a worse time, as he was in the middle of publicizing climate thriller "Geostorm" while also shoot-



ing scenes for heist movie "Den of Thieves" and military actioner "Hunter Killer". "I was in seven countries

over five weeks and I could barely walk, and it was maybe the toughest period of my life — going on talk shows, pre-tending you're good," he recalls with a grimace.

In terms of aches and

scrapes, last year was a doozy, the actor told AFP in a recent interview in Beverly Hills to promote his role as an

elite cop in "Den of Thieves" "I put on 25 pounds (11 kilograms) — at one point I was 30 pounds heavier — just to play that character and in the final day of shooting I hurt my knee during an action scene," he said.

"Unfortunately I'd already committed to starring in another movie eight days later - 'Keepers,' in Scotland — which, when I arrived, I realized was all on the side of a mountain — six weeks walking up and down a mountain.

Challenges

"By the time I'd finished that both knees were screwed. And then I had a motorbike accident where I landed on my knees, so it's been an interesting year of challenges.

Born in Paisley, on the outskirts of Glasgow, Butler broke Hollywood with his legendary rippling washboard abs — some critics unkindly and inaccurately suggested they were digitally-enhanced — as marauding King Leonidas in Zack Snyder's "300".

His more than two dozen roles since have included a gangster in Guy Ritchie's "RocknRolla" (2009), a vigilante killer in "Law Abiding Citizen" (2009) and an alcoholic drug-abusing biker in "Machine Gun Preacher" (2011).

He has also shown his soft side in romantic comedies like 2007's "P.S. I Love You", "The Ugly Truth" in 2009 and opposite Jennifer Anniston in "The Boundary (2009) and population of the Company (2009) and population of the Company (2009). ty Hunter" (2010).

He can be still periodically be found saving the president or the planet from befalling calamity of varying degrees of ludicrousness in big, brainless actioners like "Olympus Has Fallen" and its sequels.

His latest project, Christian Gudegast's "Den of Thieves", opened two weeks ago to lukewarm reviews but has matched its production budget with a respectable \$30 million box office.

His 48th movie, it follows the intersecting lives of the major crimes unit of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department — known as the "Regulators" — and the "Outlaws", an elite band of robbers.

With an ensemble cast that includes hip hop star Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, rapper Ice Cube's son O'Shea Jackson Jr and a particularly buff looking Pablo Schreiber ("The Wire", "Lords of Dogtown"), it may be the first movie in which Butler has had serious competition for the position of Alpha Male.

"I haven't seen that amount of testosterone and kind of alpha, predator, apex energy since '300' and even then not as much among the lead characters," he joked.

He admitted there was a "healthy sizing each other up" on set but added that it was nice to work with "a bunch of good dudes with good hearts.

No movie is above scrutiny from the Hollywood press when it comes to gender and racial diversity, and not even a self-consciously macho heist movie gets a pass.

Butler and his co-stars were asked at a recent press conference why there weren't more women in lead roles in "Den of Thieves" and batted the question politely into the long grass.

Measured

AFP asked Butler afterwards if he thought the pressure for every movie to tick diversity boxes was unrealistic and he paused as he measured the tone of his response.

"I think sometimes that pressure is fair. It's a movement I can get behind and I understand it," he ven-

"But then when people try and apply it to everything, including a movie about a bunch of male undercover cops and a gang of ex-military and say, 'Shouldn't you have some women in there?' — then no.

"You pay lip service to the question and you smile

Also:

LOS ANGELES: "Riverdale" star KJ Apa has been signed to lead the ensemble cast for Gulfstream Pictures' romantic comedy "The Last Summer".

Gulfstream principal Bill Bindley is directing from a script he co-wrote with his brother, Scott Bindley, with a polish by **April Prosser** ("Plus One"). "The Last Summer" follows a group of young

adults whose lives intersect in Chicago over the summer before they start college.

Gulstream partner Mike Karz and Wayne Rice will produce. Principal photography is scheduled to

"KJ is one of today's most talented and sought-after young stars both here and abroad, and we are excited to announce that he will lead our ensemble cast," Karz said.

Apa, a native of New Zealand, currently stars as Archie Andrews on the CW's drama series "Riverdale". He was the teenage lead in 2017's "A Dog's Purpose" and broke out on the New Zealand soap opera 'Shortland Street"

Warner-based Gulfstream's producing credits include "The Nut Job", "Blended", and "Mothers Day". Gulfstream's other upcoming projects include a feature film adaptation of Julia Butterfly Hill's autobiography "The Legacy of Luna: The Story of a Tree, a Woman and the Struggle to Save the Redwoods" and "King David".

Apa is repped by UTA, Luber Roklin Entertainment and attorney Karl Austen of Jackoway Tyerman Wertheimer Austen Mandelbaum Morris & Klein. The news was first reported by Deadline Hollywood.



This image released by Acorn TV shows Zoe Wanamaker (from left), Miranda Richardson and Phyllis Logan in a scene from the series 'Girlfriends'. (AP)



Actress Monica Bellucci arrives to be honored with the Filming In Italy and Italian Institute of Culture Los Angeles Creativity awards in Hollywood, fornia on Jan 31, 2018. (AFP)



Variety

LOS ANGELES: Many female nominees and guests at this year's BAFTA Film Awards plan to don black at the upcoming ceremony in a show of solidarity with their counterparts who did the same at the Golden Globes, film and fashion sources say

Variety sister title WWD reports that nominees and guests plan to band together in a show of support for the Time's Up and #MeToo movements in a decision "made only recently." "With a little less than three weeks to go, designers and brands are scrambling to replace their original choices with the color of the moment," WWD said.

The awards ceremony takes place at London's Royal Albert Hall on Feb 18, which falls during London Fashion Week. Joanna Lumley will host for the first time after replacing **Stephen Fry**. (RTRS)

LOS ANGELES: Ridley Scott is to be honored with a prestigious BAFTA fellowship, the highest accolade that the organization gives. The director of "All the Money in the World" and "Blade Runner" will receive the honor at next month's BAFTA film awards ceremony.

Scott's acclaimed career spans four decades, beginning with his 1977 debut, "The Duellists." He has garnered five BAFTA nominations and three Oscar nominations for an oeuvre that includes such classics as "Thelma and Louise," "Alien," and "Gladiator."

"It is a privilege to have been able to make a career for myself in this industry, and to be honored for my body of work is indeed very gratifying," said Scott, who has made more than two dozen films. Other directors who have received the

BAFTA fellowship include Alfred Hitchcock, Steven Spielberg, Alan Parker, Stanley Kubrick and Martin Scorsese. Actors and actresses accorded the honor include Elizabeth Taylor, Judi Dench, Helen Mirren, Anthony Hopkins, Laurence Olivier and Sidney Poitier. (RTRS)

LOS ANGELES: Banijay Rights has acquired "Wisting," an ambitious 12 million euros 10-part thriller series based on **Jorn Lier Horst**'s crime novels.

Produced by Danish outfit Good Company Films and Norway's Cinenord, "Wisting

Television

'BBC treating women as enemy over pay gap'

In 'Girlfriends', women get pain, laughs

PASADENA, California, Feb 1, (AP): The women of "Girlfriends" are having a very rough go of it, and that's just in the first episode.

Miranda Richardson's Sue is dumped by her lover and the magazine she helped him build. Phyllis Logan's Linda is abruptly widowed and may be broke. Zoe Wanamaker's Gail is losing a husband to divorce and gaining her ex-con son.

"It's high farce what happens on one day to all these people, who are sort of thrown together in the storm," Richardson said during a recent visit to Southern California.

But there's pain to be had in Acorn TV's six-episode "Girlfriends," and mystery and, significantly, is delivered up by three veteran actresses. Netflix's Jane Fonda-Lily Tomlin series "Grace and Frankie" aside, there are scant Hollywood TV or movie vehicles that give full voice to mature women and their experiences.

So it's up to the ÛK's "Girlfriends" to help fill the void. The series, from prolific English writer-director Kay Mellor, debuts here this week courtesy of the British-centric Acorn streaming service. The show is something of an anomaly in its native land: When its trio of stars aged 50-plus was announced, it made the evening

There are younger characters, male and female, in "Girlfriends," including Matthew Lewis (Neville Longbottom in the "Harry Potter" movie franchise) as Gail's son. But Lewis knows his character's place in the scheme of

He recalled series mastermind Mellor discussing TV's habit of relegating female characters to serving as the mothers, wives or secretaries of the men who carry the story.

"She said, 'We wanted to make a show where, no, they were the focus and it was the men that were supporting roles," Lewis said during a recent O&A with TV critics.

As a well-meaning if wayward son and single dad, he gets a chance to shine in the role — literally, since his character, Tom, sports a glossy fake tan to make it appear he's back from an island vacation, not the slammer.

But center ring is owned by the three respected actresses who play longtime friends reunited by their woes. Richardson's credits range from "The Crying Game" to "Black Adder II" to the "Harry Potter" role of Rita Skeeter. Logan played the admirable housekeeper Mrs Hughes in "Downton Abbey" (yes, she'd love to see the talked-about movie happen but has no update to offer). Wanamaker appeared in "Agatha Christie's Poirot" and "Mr Selfridge"

Another sign it's a British show: The women look attractive and real.

"It would be ludicrous if a woman meant to be working class was looking like she'd Botox-ed off her face," Logan said in an interview, referring to the injectable potion that reduces facial movement and thus lines. "It's not believable, is it?"

The actresses make the most of their roles, from the occasional bits of slapstick to moments of vulnerability. All revolves around the small indignities of aging - those darn wrinkles, gray hair — and the bigger life crises that don't discriminate by decade.

Memorable

For Richardson's Sue, there's a memorable hear-me-roar moment in which she bravely confronts her disloyal partner and then discovers the makeup she applied while driving is at absurd, kabûki face-paint levels.

"She thinks she knows what she's going to say and how she's going to do it, and she's holding it together," Richardson said in an interview. "And she's betrayed herself. Awful, awful."

As her glossy life crumbles, type-A Sue has a lot to learn.

"I don't think she's unkind, but maybe she needs to get kinder to herself. Instead of making pronouncements to other people, 'you should do this,' she needs to look after herself," Richardson said.

Logan, who pulled off an impressive kitchen pratfall with a stuntwoman's help, is game for anything her character may face if there's a second season of "Girlfriends." Or almost anything.

"If I was asked to be in a bikini, I might draw the line," she said, smil-

Also

LONDON: A senior BBC journalist who quit her post to protest the media company's gender pay gap argued Wednesday that management is hurting the corporation's credibility by

failing to address the issue. Carrie Gracie, the broadcaster's former China editor, testified before a British parliamentary committee that BBC managers have treated women who speak out about pay "as some sort of enemy.

Gracie said once confronted, the corporation tried to "throw money at me to resolve the problem".

"This will not resolve my problem," she said. "My problem will be resolved by an acknowledgement my work was of equal value to the men I served alongside". Gracie resigned in early January

after learning that male colleagues in similar jobs had much higher salaries. Gracie said she told the BBC: "I demand to be paid equally".

Tensions over pay flared last summer when the BBC released a list of top earners, which showed that many high-profile female employees earned far less than their male coun-Gracie said management's failure to address the problem was "damag-

ing the credibility of the BBC in a completely unacceptable way." 'We're not in the business of producing toothpaste or tires at the BBC,"

she said. "Our business is truth. "If we're not prepared to look at

ourselves honestly, how can we be trusted to look at anything else in reporting honestly?" BBC Director-General **Tony Hall**,

who was also questioned by the Culture, Media and Sport Committee, said the BBC did not discriminate based on gender. But he said there was "a difference between the scale and scope" of jobs that meant salaries

follows a police officer William Wisting who started shooting in Norway with local star Sven Nordin ("Valkyrien"). has just lost his wife and raises his daughter alone while trying to bring down Norway's ("Kick It!") and Trygve Allister Diesen most notorious criminals. The series has just

"Wisting" was created Katarina Launing



Rio Mangini (from left), Elijah Stevenson, Peyton Kennedy, Sydney Sweeney, Quinn Liebling and Jahi Di'Allo Winston attend the season one premiere of Netflix's 'Everything ...!' at AMC 34th Street on Jan 31, 2018 in New York. (AP)

("The Third Eye") who are also directing it. The "Wisting" books have sold over 1.2 million copies in Norway alone and been translated into 30 languages. Trygve Allister Diesen and Kathrine Valen Zeiner ("Eyewitness") wrote the series adaptation. (RTRS)

LOS ANGELES: Variety has been given exclusive access to the trailer for "Genesis," which world premieres in Panorama Special at the Berlin Film Festival. **Arpad**

Bogdan's film is backed by the Hungarian National Film Fund, which also supported 2017 Berlin Golden Bear winner and Oscar nominee "On Body and Soul." "Genesis," starring Anna Marie Cseh and Milan Csordas, "provides a dramatic depiction of sin, catharsis and rebirth."

according to a statement. It centers on "a young Roma boy, whose childhood reaches a sudden and drastic end when he loses his family in a tragic and brutal attack." A young female lawyer, under pressure from her superiors, takes on the defense of one of the men facing trial for the part he allegedly played in this series of racist murders.

It is while researching the case that she comes into contact with the young boy, called as a witness, and "this chance meeting changes both their lives forever." A teenage girl also becomes involved when her boyfriend's dark secrets come to light. (RTRS)

Fashion

Blackout on carpets

Marchesa cancels NY 'Fashion Week Show'

NEW YORK, Feb 1, (Agencies): The luxe womenswear label co-owned by the estranged wife of movie mogul Harvey Weinstein has canceled its show at New York Fashion Week after a decade presenting there.

The Marchesa show was scheduled to take place on Feb 14. The company said in a statement that Georgina Chapman and her business and design partner, Keren Craig, will not be there this time around but are "looking forward to presenting their Fall 2018 collection in an updated format this season." No additional details were released.

The brand has been a mainstay both at fashion week and on red carpets for a decade. But there's been a Marchesa blackout on the carpets since Weinstein was



accused by scores of women of sexual misconduct, including rape. He is under investigation police in New York and California. Chapman left Weinstein

shortly after the allegations against him arose in the fall. She firmly condemned his alleged actions but has been mum about the future of Marchesa.

Chapman

She's not the only one with little to say: Nearly two dozen celebrities who have worn the brand or are otherwise connected to Chapman would not comment or did not respond to requests for comment on Marchesa's future or whether they would don Marchesa again.

Two, Felicity Huffman and more recently Jessica Chastain, are exceptions, revealing pressure from Weinstein to wear the label. Huffman said she succumbed in 2005 after he threatened to pull financing for a film. Chastain recently told The Wall Street Journal that she pushed back, refusing to cooperate for a 2014 premiere of "The Disappearance of Eleanor Rigby," distributed by the Weinstein Co.

Chastain wore Versace instead. Weinstein took a dig over the dust up when he introduced her that night, telling the audience: "If I had to get in a boxing ring with Muhammad Ali or Jessica Chastain, I would choose Muhammad Ali," according to Chastain.

Friends of Chapman, including Alyssa Milano, have come to her defense, to the initial chagrin of Weinstein's most outspoken accuser, Milano's "Charmed" co-star Rose McGowen

McGowen, a former actress and now vocal activist who has accused Weinstein of rape, later walked back snide remarks she made about Chapman and Marchesa on Twitter.

Complicit

But she told The Associated Press on Wednesday, when asked whether Chapman was complicit in her husband's alleged misconduct: "By sticking your head in the sand and making it OK as long as you get what you want, you have a hand and you're complicit in the destruction of souls."

Weinstein has denied McGowen's allegation from the beginning. In a statement Tuesday, his attorney, Ben Brafman, called the rape claim "a bold lie."

So can Chapman and Craig continue to make a living? Even in the face of relentless momentum involving Weinstein's accusers, the idea that Marchesa will go under as collateral damage is farfetched. But their impact in Hollywood is most definitely in peril.

It may be too soon to know whether Marchesa will eventually benefit from a "sympathy bump" or remain off limits on red carpets among past patrons now unwilling to talk about the brand.

"Marchesa had access to the entertainment business and a way to market and advertise that no other designers had," said Allen Adamson a brand analyst in New York. "They had an inside track to the red carpet and now that's gone. You can't buy that.'

The Marchesa duo earlier this month distributed digital pre-fall lookbooks for both their main line and the lower-priced Notte, showing off details on Instagram. As for the British Chapman, she sought refuge in London soon after announcing she would leave her husband but her company remains firmly planted in Weinstein's native New York.

"I think Marchesa as a brand was very, very successful in and of itself but also because of the power that Weinstein had with a lot of New York-based showrooms and PR firms and agencies," said Connie Wang, who writes about the fashion industry for the site Refinery 29.

"He was able to get Marchesa dresses on a lot of very famous women, but Marchesa right now is in a bit of a precarious situation," she said.

Adamson agreed with Wang on one thing: In the case of Marchesa and other red carpet dressers, access is as important as craftsmanship, the latter being something Marchesa has an abundance of. How much that helps going forward is an open question, he said.

"They were playing with an unfair advantage: Harvey's bullying as well as Harvey's access. They'll never have either of those again. They're success was buoved by a sort of insider trading.'

Weinstein and Chapman met at party in 2004, the year Chapman and Craig, old chums from design school, launched their company, Chapman once told Vogue. She was a young model at the time and said she didn't know who he was. He popped the question in November 2007 and they married the following month at his waterfront estate in Connecticut, according to reports at the time. Chapman wore a gown of her own design.

Also:

WASHINGTON: Supermodel **Kate Upton** has accused fashion giant Guess's co-founder Paul Marciano of sexually harassing women. Upton, 25, did not cite a specific incident in her

criticism Wednesday of Guess co-founder and creative director Marciano, who is 65. Upton, who was once the face of Guess, became

the latest star to add her voice to the global #MeToo campaign against sexual misconduct, that kicked off following accusations against Hollywood mogul Har-

vey Weinstein.
"It's disappointing that such an iconic women's brand @Guess is still empowering Paul Marciano as their creative director #me too," Upton wrote on Twit-

She repeated this on Instagram and added: "He shouldn't be allowed to use his power in the industry to sexually and emotionally harass women #metoo.

Marciano co-founded Guess in 1981 and has been its executive chairman and chief creative officer since

Upton is married to star Houston Astros pitcher **Justin Verlander**, and is known for appearing on the cover of Sports Illustrated swimsuit editions. She has also done some acting.



A model presents a creation by Naulover during the 080 Barcelona Fashion Week in Barcelona on Jan 31, 2018. (AFP)



Hailee Steinfeld attends 'The Minefield Girl' Audio Visual Book Launch at Lightbox on Jan 31, 2018 in New York City. (AFP)

Variety

LOS ANGELES: In anticipation of Marvel's "Black Panther," Kendrick Lamar announced the songs appearing on the film's soundtrack on Tuesday.

Lamar, fresh off five wins at Sunday's 60th annual Grammys, co-produced the album alongside Top Dawg Entertainment

label CEO Anthony "Top Dawg" Tiffith. He tweeted the cover for "Black Panther The Album" and its 14 songs — five of which he is featured on. The album, being released Feb 9, also includes music from The Weeknd, SZA, Travis Scott, Khalid. 2 Chainz, and Future.

When the album was first announced, Lamar said, "Marvel Studios" 'Black Panther' is amazing, from its cast to its director. The magnitude of this film showcases a great marriage of art and culture. I'm truly honored to contribute my knowledge of producing sound and writing music along side Rvan and Marvel's vision.

The album includes music featured in and inspired by "Black Panther," which stars Chadwick Boseman, Michael B. Jordan, Lupita Nyong'o, and Danai **Gurira** in the first Marvel movie with an all-black cast and black director. The film follows King T'Challa — Boseman's Black Panther — following the events of "Captain America: Civil War," as he returns home to Wakanda. It will be released Feb 16, a week after the album drops. (RTRS)

CHICAGO: An aspiring rapper was sentenced to more than 15 years in prison after posing in a music video with guns despite a previous conviction, US prosecutors announced Wednesday.

Ricardo Burgos, a little-known Chicago artist who performs under the name Nation, brandished two guns as he rapped "about selling drugs, committing acts of violence and disrespecting law enforcement," prosecutors said in a statement.

While the United States has some of the world's most lax restrictions on guns, felons are forbidden from owning weapons. Burgos was previously convicted of sell-

ing crack cocaine and heroin. He pleaded guilty Tuesday and was sentenced to 188 months in prison by Judge Robert Guzman at a federal court in Chicago. (AFP)

PARIS: The historic French fashion label Paul Poiret has been resurrected and will show its first collection in nearly nine decades at Paris fashion week next month. the brand said.

The legendary designer and bon vivant, who with Coco Chanel is credited with liberating women from Victorian era corsets, was the first couturier to launch his own

Backed by the South Korean department store chain Shinsegae, the revived brand is being led by Belgian entrepreneur Anne Chapelle, owner of the Ann Demeulemeester and Haider Ackermann labels.

"The house will present its first ready-to-

wear autumn-winter collection designed by artistic director Yiqing Yin," the label said. Rising Franco-Chinese creator Yin launched her own couture house in 2011 and was later admitted into the elite haute couture ranks, which is limited to a few dozen brands.

Music

Civil rights song 'We Shall Overcome' part of public domain

Women of Grammys strike back

NEW YORK, Feb 1, (Agencies): New Zealand pop prodigy Lorde has thanked her fans for supporting female musicians, as artists hit back amid controversy that the Grammy Awards neglected women — a spat fueled by comments from the Recording Academy's president seen as disparaging.

The 21-year-old's "Melodrama" was the only work by a woman nominated for the most prestigious prize of Album of the Year on the music industry's biggest night Sunday.

She not only was bested by Bruno Mars' "24K Magic" but she was not given a spot to perform at the televised show in New York. The Recording Academy, which administers the awards, said the roster was full. Lorde took out a full-page advertise

ment in The New Zealand Herald with doodlings about the Grammys and a handwritten note that thanked readers 'for loving and embracing 'Melodrama' the way you did." "Thank you, also, for believing in

female musicians. You set a beautiful precedent!" she wrote. The Grammy winners slanted overwhelmingly male at a time of mounting activism by women against sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

The Grammy show's most memorable performer may have been Kesha, who fiercely sang her track "Praying" about a producer she says raped and psychologically tormented her - allegations he denies.

Recording Academy president Neil Portnow told reporters that the music industry needed to show a "welcome mat" to women, but drew controversy as he explained how female artists could win more awards.

"I think it has to begin with women who have the creativity in their hearts and their souls who want to be musicians... to step up, because I think they would be welcome," he said.

Pop singer Pink struck back without naming Portnow: "Women in music don't need to 'step up' — women have been stepping since the beginning of time."

Honoring women would show "the next generation of women and girls and boys and men what it means to be equal, and what it looks like to be fair," she

wrote in a handwritten note on Twitter. Pink was backed by pop superstar Katy Perry, the most followed person on Twitter, who hailed women "making incredible art in the face of continual resistance."

"We ALL have a responsibility to call out the absurd lack of equality everywhere we see it," Perry, whose latest album was not nominated for any Grammys, wrote to her more than 108 million followers. Despite this year's controversy, the Grammys have not lacked female victors in the past.

Year were both women - Adele and Taylor Swift. And on Sunday, Canadian soul-pop singer Alessia Cara won one of the top awards, Best New Artist.

The last two winners of Album of the

But Cara also faced criticism on social media with users saying the 21-year-old singer, whose breakthrough hit "Here" came out in early 'Kesha was incredible'

Vanderwaal 'so happy' for Cara's win

By Michele Amabile Angermiller

America's Got Talent" season 11 winner Grace Vanderwaal is singing the praises of New York City, releasing a stunning new video for "City Song," the third single off her album, "Just the Beginning."

The 14-year old singer/songwrite.

er, who was signed to AGT judge Simon Cowell's Syco Music and Columbia Records after winning the NBC competition, wrote the song as a love letter to her home state, which just hosted the 60th annual Grammy Awards at Madison Square Garden on Jan. 28.

Set to a percolating beat, Vander waal invites listeners to, "Just keep moving and take it all in," before celebrating with the catchy chorus to "take the city and make it our

"Growing up so close to New York City, I always loved going to the city, but I'd be disappointed because songs about New York always made it seem so magical and perfect, and when I was younger I just thought it was busy and dirty, says Vanderwaal, a native of Suffern, New York. "Now I've realized that it's not about the city itself, it's about taking the life inside the city and making it your own magical

Question: What's the story be-

hind "City Song?" Answer: When I wrote this song, I was in a studio overlooking Times Square and was so inspired seeing all the different people, sights, and sounds that make New York so

Q: You play a variety of instruments on "Just the Beginning," including bass, ukulele, glockenspiel, percussion. How much creative input did you have in the recording

2015, did not qualify as new.

Cara - whose socially conscious lyricism wrestles with issues such as poor self-image - responded on Instagram that she had not sought the award and added: "I am not going to be upset about something I've wanted since I

Also:

NASHVILLE, Tenn: The civil rights anthem "We Shall Overcome," which has been quoted by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and was made popular by folk singer Pete Seeger, has been declared a part of public domain.

Ludlow Music, the song's publisher, agreed in a New York federal court last week to back down on claims of copyright after losing a summary judgment in the case. The publisher said in a stipulation filed last Friday that it waived the right to appeal the judge's opinion and agreed the melody and lyrics are "dedicated to the public domain."

The lawsuit was filed by the We Shall

tive process. It was so fun to be able to take creative ideas that came up in the moment and make them a reality, whether it was with a new instrument or just a sound we made up in the studio. I worked with some amazing co-writers and producers on the album that helped put it all together into something I'm really proud of. Q: How has your life changed in

A: The whole album was a crea-

the past year?

A: This past year was incredible for my career. I released my first album, went on tour for the first time. met so many of my amazing fans. and worked really, really hard. It was why I titled the album "Just the Beginning," because it all felt like I was just getting started.

Q: Did you watch the Grammy Awards? Were you inspired by Kesha's performance or Alessia Cara's speech of dreaming of a Grammy since she was 12? What do you think the challenges are for young girls breaking into the music industry?

A: I think it's so important for women and girls to feel like they have a voice and to come together and support each other. It was incredible to see that at the Grammys, and I love Alessia Cara and her influence on my generation. I'm so happy for her. I think there's a misconception about the industry, that you have to change who you are to look "cool" in order to succeed, and that's just not true. I always want to stay true to who I am, and if people don't like that, then that's okay. I think fans appreciate when you're genuine and honest, and that's how I try to be through

Overcome Foundation, a group that wanted to make a documentary about the song, and Butler Films, which produced

the 2013 film "The Butler." The origins of the song are unclear, but precursors outlined in the lawsuit

include hymns and African-American spirituals. In the 1940s, a song called "We Will Overcome" was used by striking tobacco workers in South Carolina. That song was then taught at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, an educational center that trained labor organizers as well as civil-rights leaders including King, Rosa Parks and John Lewis.

Ludlow filed for copyright of a version of the song in 1960 and again in 1963 to add Seeger's name as a co-writer, although he later asked to be removed from the copyright. Proceeds from the writers' royalties are provided to the Highlander Research and Education Center in Tennessee for a scholarship for art, cultural and activism projects in African-American communities.

Her designs first hit the headlines when the French actress and "Amelie" star Audrey Tautou wore one of her spectacular white pleated dresses to preside over the awards ceremony at the Cannes Film Festival in 2013. (AFP)

LOS ANGELES: Sony Music Entertainment and China's Tencent Music Entertainment group have jointly launched

Liquid State, a new music label specializ-





ing in electronic dance music (EDM). The label will represent local talent from Asia and also incorporate live touring and club events. The launch announcement was made at an event in Hong Kong on Wednesday.

The move also puts Sony deeper into business with Spotify; the streaming service and Tencent Music Entertainment each acquired a reported equity stake of 10% in each other via a December stock swap. (RTRS)



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Scratch pad

ACROSS 1 Speedway brand 4 West Indies native 9 Bounds along 14 "Just a ____!"

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flags National Audubon Society 63 They might be thrown around 21 Colorado tributary in a rodeo 22 Plot device in "The 65 Digitally endorse Shining" that has

51 Christmas

52 Prince, e.g.

54 A, in Austria

words)

82 "Really!"

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86 Give a ring?

88 Hallmark com

83 Spotted

significance when spelled backward **67** Terminate 23 Restaurant chain founded by the Raffel brothers (hence the name)

24 Elevator choice 25 Turns briefly? 26 Some Carnaval performances 28 Called from the cote

30 Telephotos, e.g. 32 Ancient Greek 34 Male that might be in a rut? 35 Stymies

37 Relative of a birch 38 College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa 39 Country singer Crystal 40 Screwy

43 Pitch 46 One of the Wayans brothers **50** Beverage: Prefix

C 2012 The New York Times, distributed by The New Syndicate

103 One of the record industry's former Big Four 104 Carpenter's aid 106 Hypotheticals 107 "Just kidding!" 108 Airer of "Christmas

in Rockefeller Center" 109 Sanctuary 111 "Hev (1963 #1 hit)

113 Mobile home: Abbr. 114 Actress Audrey 66 Sleigh-bell sounds of "Amélie" 117 Animal on Scotland's " (psalm coat of arms

69 Chemistry exam? 119 Kind of cabinet 70 Skin art, informally 122 Written history 71 Descartes's 123 Who's depicted in conclusion this puzzle when the circled letters are 72 Clear connected from A to 73 Yule sound? Z and back to A 75 ____ guerre 124 Games of chance 77 Range grp. 125 Prison part 78 & 80 One of TV's

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suggestion 3 Large column 90 Divan of smoke 4 Terminated 92 " welcome! 93 Cow poke? 5 Opposite of dep 94 Avoid a bogev, barely 6 Heists 7 Description of rustic 97 Neighbor of a bishop:

Abbr. 8 Importune 98 Souped-up cars 9 It moves a 102 Mahershala cursor back Oscar winner for 10 Body check? "Moonlight"

11 Whiz kids 12 Want-ad abbr. 13 Having streaks 14 W.W. II ordeal at Leningrad 15 Notably nonunionized

16 Mama of song 18 Decorates brilliantly 21 One of a dozen good things? 27 Friend

workers

29 Oodles 31 Vulcan mind 33 Beginning to do well? 36 Kind of skirt

40 "Fanfare for the Common Man" composer 41 Hair straighteners 42 Licorice-flavored

brew

44 Singer with a No. 1 hit about 123-Across 45 Feature depicted in the upper left of this puzzle 47 Hatmaker

48 Like van Gogh, in later life 49 Les . "WKRP in

Cincinnati" news director 51 & 53 123-Across, in song

64 Align

56 One of many in a Swiss Army knife 58 Letters on some Navy carriers 59 Infantry member:

briefly 60 Alternative to J.F.K 62 1990s tennis great Huber

83 ____ City (Baghdad

suburb) 66 First name at Woodstock 85 "In your dreams!" 74 Political org. 87 Result of a sack on since 1854 third and long, 76 Shout of approval maybe 79 Three ___ Men

81 Didn't hedge one's bets 82 Starting point for an prognosticator annual flight

89 Bunks in barracks 91 "Brava!" elicitor 93 Punxsutawney

94 Deliverer of Christmas packages 95 Capital whose name ends in its state's

postal code 96 Cousin of an alpaca 99 Functioning robotically

100 Repetitive bit of computer code 101 A-listers

104 Boy in "A Charlie Brown Christmas' 105 Tombstone marshals

110 California's Big 112 Durham sch. 115 Roofing material 116 Father Christmas

118 Crew member 120 Games org. 121 Fiscal-year part: Abbr.



In this Jan 13, 2010 file photo, two young wild horses play while grazing in Reno, Nev. Animal rights activists are suing to block what they say is an unprecedented federal plan to capture thousands of wild horses over 10 years in Nevada without the legally required environmental reviews intended to protect the mustangs and US rangeland. (AP)

Conceptis Sudoku

The grid must be so completed that every row, column and 3x3 box has every digit from 1 to 9 inclusive

Difficulty Level ★★

Difficulty Level *

Answer to yesterday's puzzle

	Allower to youterday o parrie							
2	7	4	5	3	8	6	9	1
6	5	3	7	9	1	2	8	4
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4	9	8	1	7	2	5	3	6
5	2	1	3	8	6	4	7	9
7	3	6	4	5	9	8	1	2

Challenger

DIRECTIONS:

with a number, one through nine. Horizontal squares should add to totals on right. Vertical squares should add to totals on bottom. Diagonal squares through center should add to total in upper and lower right. THERE MAY BE MORE THAN ONE SOLUTION. Today's Challenge Time 1 Minutes 14 Seconds Your Working Time _ Minutes Seconds Yesterday's solution 6 7 7 7 7 7 8	Fill each square					20
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Seconds

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Sabat alaf wa sabou maah wa

contract 5776

Sylvia

South dealer, Both sides vulnerable. NORTH 🕈 A 6 **♥**AQ ◆ A K 9 2 **♣**QJ1097 WEST EAST **♦**K43 **♥** J 9 **♥**10876543 **♦**876 ◆ O J 10 ♣AK654 **♠**832 SOUTH ♠QJ1098752 **♥** K. 2 ♦ 5 4 3

The bidding: West South North East • 2 🏚 Dble Pass 4 🏚 Pass 6 🏚 Pass Pass Dble Redble

Opening lead — king of clubs. It took Sylvia a long time to learn point count. This was not because she opposed point count as a matter of principle there was more to it than that. The truth of the matter was that Sylvia held the curious notion that you measured a hand by the number of tricks you could take, so that counting the number of points you held was in effect an exercise in futil-

Take this hand with which most

members of the club, as South, would either pass or open three spades. But Sylvia appraised her hand differently.

She felt she'd make lots of tricks with

spades as trumps, so she opened one

spade. West overcalled with two clubs, which was followed by a bloodeurdling double by North. After Sylvia then blithely jumped to four spades with her six high-eard points, North can hardly be blamed for raising her

It's easy to see that Sylvia had to lose a spade and a diamond for down one. But defeat never occurred to her. She rolled merrily along, taking tricks left and right, until she finally had 12 of them.

She trumped the club lead, led a spade to dummy's six and ruffed another club. A heart to the gueen and a club ruff were followed by a heart to the ace and another club ruff. Then, after leading a diamond to the king, Sylvia trumped dummy's last club. Now she led the ace and another diamond, losing to East's queen,

This left her with two cards the Q-J of spades while West had the K-4 and dummy the ace of spades and nine of diamonds. When East returned a heart, Sylvia ruffed with the jack, and West's seemingly invincible trump trick went up in smoke.

lice said.

odds 'n' ends

MEXICO CITY: Far from the crowds of passengers, lines and passport control, Madison spreads his wings on the side of a runway at Mexico's international airport, the busiest in Latin America.

He is one of several per-egrine falcons deployed to prevent "bird strikes" - a hazardous collision between birds and planes that can have dangerous and even catastrophic

In 2009, for instance, a US Airways jet had to set down on the Hudsón River in New York after a flock of birds took out its engines. In January this year, a Mexicobound KLM flight made an emergency landing after hitting birds on take-off in the Netherlands.

"It's dangerous. Birds don't mix with planes. They can hit a turbine." Oscar Chavez, a 26-year-old who is one of the biologists handling the falcons in Mexico, told AFP. Each day. Madison and an

other peregrine falcon named Ilse are on duty at the airport, which sees 44 million passengers pass through it each year.

"The other birds realize a predator is around and they disappear," said Nayely Flores, who is in charge of animals at the terminal. Getting Madison ready re-

quires a daily procedure that Chavez said was like a ritual: attaching a geolocalization tag to his leg while dangling quall meat to distract him. (AFP)

LONDON: Benin's vast Pendjari National Park, one of West Africa's last remaining wildlife refuges, will receive \$23.5 million (18.9 million euros) to help protect it and fight poaching, donors announced in London on Wednesday.

The Benin government will provide \$6 million (4.8 million euros), with the National Geographic Society donating \$7.5 million (6 million euros) and the US Wyss Foundation stumping up the rest through the African Parks NGO, the groups said at a press conference

The 4,800-square-kilometre Pendjari is one of the three parks in the "WAP" complex (W, Arly and Pendjari) that spans across covers Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger, and is one of the last remaining wildlife sanctuaries in West Africa.

It is home to the cheetah, West African Lion, antelope and buffalo.

The UNESCO World Heritage site, which is located more than 12 hours away from the economic capital Cotonou, has suffered from decades of neglect, and is under threat from poaching and population growth. (AFP)

MAKASSAR, Indonesia: Two Chinese men have been arrested in Indonesia for attempting to smuggle 200 kg (440 pounds) of illicit turtle shells out of the country, police said Thursday, as they try to stamp out a lucrative illegal wildlife trade.

Acting on a tip, authorities said they raided a house in Makassar on the island of Sulawesi Wednesday and found the massive haul of turtle shells stuffed into boxes

The suspects, 25-year-old Chen Jianyi and Zhong Qiushan, 31, admitted to buying the shells in Indonesia's Papua province and then shipping them by boat to Makassar, po-

The suspected traffickers planned to move the shells to China where they would be used to make accessories, trinkets and souvenirs, according to authorities. (AFP)

Sunday: Bad news, good news.



Mountaineering rules and regulations lacking

Nepal losing out to China as Everest operators cross mountain

KATHMANDU, Feb 1, (AFP): Poor regulation and overcrowding are pushing Everest climbers away from Nepal to China, which is investing millions to boost a rival path to the top of the world.

Veteran climbing outfits, fed up with what they regard as a lax attitude to safety on Nepal's southern flank of the 8,848 metre (29,029-foot) peak, are starting to shift operations to Everest's north side in Tibet.

"The south side is way too overcrowded with inexperienced people," Phil Crampton, a seasoned Everest hand who announced in January his company Altitude Junkies would shift to China, the third such outfit to abandon Nepal in recent years.

The exodus could dent a longstanding source of revenue for the cash-strapped Himalayan nation — Kathmandu raked in more than \$4 million in Everest permits fees alone

A growing chorus of foreign-led Everest operators in Nepal are demanding greater scrutiny of low-cost outfits that have mushroomed in recent years, offering cheap expeditions up the fabled summit.

These budget players are luring hordes of amateur climbers chasing the thrill of Everest but also risking death and injury, climbing experts say, warning that some expedition leaders are ill-equipped to tackle the peak.

Intolerable

Seven of the 10 climbers who died on Everest's south in the last two years were summiting with budget operators, according to information from the Himalayan Database.

"What has happened over the last few years on the south side is absolutely intolerable," said Lukas Furtenbach, whose company Furtenbach Adventures relocated to China last year citing safety concerns.

Those pushing for change want to see permit numbers curbed and greater oversight of guides and operators.

Nepal introduced new laws in late December barring solo climbers, blind mountaineers and double amputees from scaling Everest, restrictions it said would make the peak safer.

But many mountaineers say the rules miss the mark.

"Nepal needs mountaineering rules



In this Jan 31, 2018 photo, thrill-seekers ride from the UAE's highest mountain as they try out a new zip line, on the peak of Jebel Jais Mountain, 25 kms (15.5 miles) north east of Ras al-Khaimah, United Arab Emirates. (AP)

United Arab Emirates opens world's longest zip line

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) claimed a record on Thursday with the opening of the world's longest zip line, measuring 2.83 kms (1.76

miles) in length.

Guinness World Records of-

and regulations. But for the operators, not for the climbers," said Furtenbach. Nepal has been criticised as

reluctant to introduce much-needed regulations because it fears harming ficials certified the zip line in Ras al-Khaimah on the same day the attraction opened to the public.

The Jebel Jais Flight takes thrillseekers atop the country's largest mountain peak, from a launch pad

an industry that spins money for the impoverished nation.

Meanwhile, China is sending a message that Everest's north is open for business, investing in climbing

as they glide past rocky terrain. It's the latest effort by the smaller lesser-known emirate of Ras al-

1,680 meters (5,512 feet) above sea

level. For nearly three minutes, riders

are suspended above the mountain

It is building a mountaineering

infrastructure vital for a safe ascent to

training centre in Lhasa and plans to allow helicopter rescues on Everest's north from 2019, according to Chinese state media. Currently helicopter res-

Khaimah to attract more tourists and

expatriate visitors from neighboring

emirates like Abu Dhabi and Dubai,

which has two separate zip line at-

tractions whizzing past some of the

world's tallest skyscrapers. (AP)

cues are only possible in Nepal. It also fixes ropes to Everest's summit at the beginning of each climbing

season, an industry standard on most major peaks around the world - but missing on the southern face in Nepal.

"China is addressing the issues in a way that Nepal has just struggled to. There is no system in place to actually enforce the rules," said Adrian Ballinger, who was the first operator to move exclusively to Everest's north in 2015.

Until a decade ago, a roughly even number of climbers attempted the summit from the northern and southern sides of Everest.

Reputation

But China's reputation took a hit when authorities closed the Tibetan side of Everest without warning in 2008, fearing protests ahead of the Beijing Olympics.

Many companies abandoned the north saying the political situation in Tibet was too unpredictable.

But that is changing due to what many in the industry see as a deteriorating situation in Nepal.

Ballinger expects more companies to move north in the coming years, especially as the Khumbu Icefall presents an increasingly avoidable danger on the south.

The icefall — a treacherous, evershifting expanse of glacial ice that all climbers must cross to reach Everest's summit from Nepal - is becoming more unstable as temperatures warm due to climate change, and has

claimed 23 lives in the last five years. Nepal's tourism department, which oversees the mountaineering industry, defended its position on Everest

"We cannot respond to every comment people make. Every year we have more people coming to climb Everest," said department head Dinesh Bhattarai.

For now Nepal remains the most popular choice - just 155 foreign mountaineers attempted to summit Everest from Tibet last year.

An ever-growing number of Indian climbers are drawn to Nepal by its proximity to home and cultural ties. Indians outnumbered all other climbers on Everest's south in 2017 bar Americans.

Many Chinese adventurers also prefer Nepal as laws back home require they summit an 8,000 metre peak before trying Everest from Tibet.

Homemade jam that uses berries to sweeten, instead of sugar

By Melissa D'Arabian

y grandmother used to make Mjam every year out of the summer bounty of berries. It was a multi-day project involving scorching-hot vats of berries, thickened by pectin and pounds of white sugar, which she balanced with the tang of lemon or lime juice. A simple slab of toasted country bread slathered with her homemade jam and some salted butter was my favorite way to start the day.

Now, in a world that favors highprotein egg whites for breakfast, or if there is a piece of toast to be had, it's covered in smashed avocado and tomato slices instead of rich red jam, I wondered if it was even worth the hassle to create a healthier version of my Grandma's recipe. Turns out, it was. The resulting recipe is so easy,

a hefty jar of jam can be whipped up in minutes, keeping my fridge stocked for weeks. As a mom of four daughters, I jump on any opportunity to remove processed sugar from our treats, and this jam stayed delectably sweet and comforting in

We use this jam to top toast like Grandma did, but we also use it instead of syrup on almond flour waffles, or to sweeten plain Greek yogurt for snacks, breakfast or dessert.

The challenge in removing the traditional white sugar is achieving the gel-like texture that makes jam, well,



This Jan 19, 2018 photo shows a no-added-sugar berry jam Bethesda, Md. (AP)

jammy. The secret is in using blueberries and apples, which both contain natural pectin, and boiling at very high heat, stirring constantly for the few minutes it takes to get the jam to

To mimic some of the sweetness of sugar, I add a few finely chopped dates, but you could actually skip them if you don't mind a little less ning process gone, the jam must be eaten within a few weeks and kept in the fridge, but given how tasty the jam is and how easy it is to make a new batch — I even use readily-available frozen mixed berries! — this doesn't seem to be a problem.

No-fuss no-sugar-added berry jam

Start to finish: 20 minutes

3 dates, finely chopped

1/2 cup water 1 small tart cooking apple, like granny smith, peeled and finely

chopped (1/4-inch cube) 3 cups frozen mixed berries (no

need to thaw) 2 teaspoons lime zest

1 tablespoon lime juice

1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract (op-Place the chopped dates and water

into a medium sauce pan and simmer for a minute or two to soften the dates. Add the chopped apple and frozen berries, and increase heat to medium high, and bring to a boil, stirring oc-

Servings: 32 (About 2-1/2 cups of casionally.

Once the mixture is boiling, turn up the heat to high, and let boil vigorously, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens and turns jammy, about 3-4 minutes. (Carefully add a tablespoon of water if mixture starts to get dry.) Once the jam feels like it's thickening, turn off the heat and stir in lime zest, lime juice and vanilla extract if using.

Will keep fresh for 2-3 weeks in a tightly-covered jar in the refrigerator.

Nutrition information per serving: 8 calories; 0 calories from fat; Og fat (Og saturated; Og trans fats); 0mg cholesterol; 0mg sodium; 2g carbohydrate; 1g fiber; 1g sugar; 0g protein. (AP)

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This week we will travel to Canada



10. Stratford

Named for Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford has grown to become Canada's premier arts town. In addition to the annual Stratford Festival, performing from April through October, Stratford is always filled with theater, music and visual arts.

The preserved 19th-century architecture and acres of parks and gardens (along its own Avon River, no less) are certain to charm. Stratford has also gained a reputation for

culinary creativity, showcased at some of



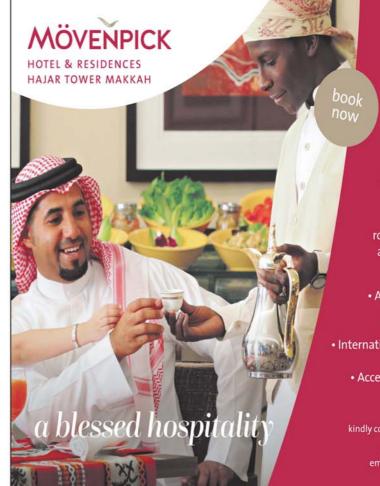
the finest restaurants in the country.

11. Calgary

The sophisticated city that grew out of the Canadian West, Calgary balances the modern and the traditional with pioneer charm.

For the full western experience, show up in time for the annual Calgary Stampede, complete with rodeos.

Year-round you'll find abundant shopping, dining and nightlife; a short drive away are some of Canada's finest national parks.



The holy city and a spirtitual stay

Enjoy great offers on the available room rates. Have a blessed stay merely a few steps away from the holy Kaaba and enjoy the following features:

 A kids club with a variety of fun games • A complete care foot massage after performing the rituals (only for men) International restaurants catering to all tastes • A fully-equipped business centre · Access to a huge shopping mall within the Abraj Al Bait complex

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What's On



KFH cricket team

KFH clinches plate final cricket trophy

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Cricket Team clinched the Kuwait Cricket (KC) plate final NBK trophy 2017-2018 after defeating the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) by 4 wickets in the final match played at Doha entertainment city ground last Saturday

It was a well-deserving victory for KFH team, who played the tournament with the determination to win. The

match went into an exciting stage at the end however, KFH man of the match smashed a match winning 37 runs to secure the victory

KFH Cricket Team's win in this tournament comes in tandem with the Bowling Tournament 2018, where KFH Bowling team clinched the first runner up prize.



The winning culinary team of Symphony

Hotel's culinary experts mark another victorious participation

Symphony Style chefs strike gold at Horeca



A photo from the event

and demonstrated its culinary expertise in the recent Horeca 2018, the largest B2B hospitality exhibition in the country, held at the Kuwait International Fair. A team of 10 culinary experts from

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait played a prominent role

the award-winning Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait joined hundreds of fellow hospitality professionals in showcasing their talents in a range of live competitions during the seventh edition of the wide-ranging event covering the hospitality, catering and food industry sectors Hundreds of the leading chefs compet-

ed in live demonstrations and Symphony Style Hotel's food and drinks experts came out on top winning a number of awards: Chef Chinthaka Sandaruwan Gamwara claimedn the first gold medal in the Chocolate Carving category.
There was more gold for Chef Chin-

thaka in the Fruit and Vegetable Carving contest, and he claimed silver for the hotel in the Ice Carving. Chef Gopala Reddy Peram demonstrated his creativity and inventiveness by taking bronze in the Mystery Basket competition, a contest in which the chefs were presented with a closed basket of ingredients from which they had to create a superb dish using at least five of the basket's ingredients.

The strong participation in Horeca 2018, emphasizes Symphony Style Hotel's reputation as a hospitality leader in the region, and highlights its commitment to supporting events that promote local culture and Kuwait as a business and leisure destination.

The hotel's senior management express their extreme appreciation to the skilled chefs who won this tough competition and gained those remarkable medals; and for their continuous efforts in innovating the most distinguished menus and remarkable variety of flavorsome dishes which make Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait a renowned food destination.

'Believe in yourself'

Inspirational story of success

By Mohammed Jawhar

When it comes to expat world in Kuwait there are a lot of struggle stories but some deserve a spotlight. Rajesh Kumar, known as Raj, a young energetic Hyderabadi guy who left his motherland India in 2004 and followed his dreams to Kuwait to start as a line employee in a reputed company in the food sector. His eagerness to learn and devotion toward his goals lead him to climb the ladder of success that at the age of 32 he became a young businessman leading a multinational chain company (Gold India Food Stuff) a leading property based in Kuwait as well as its branches spread in India along GCC countries Dubai, Qatar and Bahrain managing a total of 480 staff of employees and supporting Kuwait market with food processing materials and act as distribution channels with reputed Kuwaiti companies. "With



Rajesh Kumar

tough competition and dominating big suppliers we succeeded to make a base business with added value by differentiating our service and products from the existing, your key of success is to believe in yourself and everything is possible," Rajesh said.



Alawi wins KD 25,000

AUB names 26 new winners in Al Hassad 'weekly draw'

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Ahli United Mohammad Abdulmajeed Bank recently conducted its Al Hassad Islamic account weekly draw, Kuwait's leading Shari'ah compliant rewards program that offers a broad range of prizes to the largest number of winners, on the 31st of January 2018. The account provides 26 weekly prizes that are comprised of KD 25,000 as a grand prize and 25 other prizes valued at KD 1,000 each. AUB also offers four quarterly prizes that are valued at KD 250,000 to each winner allowing them to achieve their dreams of travelling, studying abroad, or owning their dream home or car.

On this occasion Ahli United Bank announced, "With this draw, we are adding 26 new winners and prizes to the Al Hassad Islamic account whereby, the total number of winners annually will

include more than 1300." The weekly grand prize winner of KD

25,000 is Matooq Alawi. 25 other winners won prizes of KD 1,000 and are as follows: Wafaa Mohammad Al Arbash, Ali Salem Mohammad, Musaed Raheel Al Enzi, Khalaf Ebrahem Al Qallaf, Hajar Duaij Al Azmi, Mohammad Yousef Yaqoub, Hanaa Mohd Al Qallaf, Amina Sayed Khalafi, Taibah Jassim Al Hababi, Ahmad Abdullah Al Azmi, Shaikhah Saad Al Saeed, Jouzah Dhuhawi Al Azmi, Ali Jawhar Ahmad, Dhuhawi Mohammad Al Rasheedi. Abdullah Al Khoudor, Marshad Abdullah Al Duwailah, Anwar Ghanam Al Jumhor, Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed, Habib Abbas Abdulla, Alaa A.Hadi, Ebrahim H. Al Rafaei, Naeema Ahmed Ebrahim Radhi, Mohammed Jaafar and Mistry Jayenprabhu Chandrakant.

Al Hassad Islamic account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the program's terms and conditions. Ahli United Bank added, "There are increased opportunities that await our current customers and those who are interested in opening an Al Hassad Islamic account to benefit from the wide range of prizes and opportunities offered this year.

Individual customers can open their accounts with a minimum deposit of KD 100, qualifying them to enter the draw. For more information on Ahli United

Bank's products and services, customers are invited to visit any of the Bank's branches or dial the customer service "Hayakum" on 1812000, or log on the Bank's website www.ahliunited.com.kw.



Dr Mahmoud presents lecture on latest techniques in eye surgery

Al Rashid Hospital (The pioneer of family care since 1969) welcomes Dr Mahmoud Hassan Morsi, specialist ophthalmology (PhD) in ophthalmology from Alexandria University, Egypt, and member of the university of Cologne, Germany.

Dr Mahmoud presented lectures on very interesting procedures and techniques in the field of ophthalmolo-

Corneal tattooing for cosmetic & visual purposes. 2) Cataract removal and lens implantation without surgical stitches.

Dr Mahmoud Morsi spoke about how the recent advances in eye surgery has helped in the high success rates of operations and rapid improvement of patients, and presented some of his cases treated before and after the operation and answered questions of the audience.

Dr Mahmoud is pleased with the extent of awareness in Kuwaiti society and is keen to follow up new developments in the field of medicine.

Dr Mahmoud Morsi is visiting us in Kuwait until the date of Feb 7.





Photos from the event

Kaifan Cooperative launches Cosmetics, food supplements festival

The member of the Board and Directors of purchasing of Kaifan Cooperative, Mubarak Jassim Al-Tanyeeb, Announced the launch of beauty and Cosmetics and Food Supplements Festival at Kaifan Cooperative Pharmacy with a discount of 20% to 50% on the world's leading brands Cosmetic and beauty experts will be ready in the

pharmacy to respond any queries. Mubarak Al-Tnayeeb added that Kaifan Cooperative will witness numerous of festivals and special offers and competitive prices and that the marketing policy of the festivals continues throughout the year of 2018.



Latest

Drinking problem?: Friends of Bill W. are available to help. Totally confidential. Email: rohsecretary@gmail.com

Narcotics Anonymous: NA can help with addiction problems. Totally confidential: 94087800 English/Arabic.

Cancer online support group: If you are Cancer patient or family member fighting with this deadly disease, come join our online support group. Best way of dealing with this disease is providing support and share our experience with each other. There are lot of things which even doctors can't tell so be member of this website and start sharing your experiences which may help others. October is recognized as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM). The primary purpose is to promote self examination and screening mammog-

raphy as the most effective way to save lives by detecting breast cancer at early stage. For more information visit: http:// fightingwithcancer.webs.com/

Latest

Feb 7

TIES Third Culture Kids: If you or someone you know has spent a significant part of his developmental years outside his parent's culture, or if his parents are from two different cultures, he is a Third Culture Kid. Join Dr Teresa Lesher to explore some of

the advantages and disadvantages of being a TCK and strategies for coping with its challenges. Discussion follows a 30-minute presentation on

Wednesday, February 7 @ 7pm Villa No 67, Street 413, Block 4, Shuhada Area, Kuwait Phone: +(965) 25231015

Email: info@tiescenter.net

TIES Chai Dhuha: Experience a Kuwaiti tradition with a cup of tea (chai) in early morning (dhuha). Feel at home among Kuwaiti ladies and seasoned expats while sharing what's on your mind.

Wednesday, February 7 @ 10am (ladies only)

Villa No 67, Street 413, Block 4, Shuhada Area, Kuwait

Phone: +(965) 25231015 Email: info@tiescenter.net

World Schools Debating: The trials to select the National Schools' Debating Team which will represent Kuwait at the World Schools' Debating Championships in Croatia in July 2018 will take place from 15:30-19:30 on Wednesday, Feb 7 at the British School of Kuwait. Open to all students in Kuwait aged

14-18.

To register your interest and to receive further details please contact Richard Boyle at q8debates@gmail.com.

General

Q8BBall Season 13: Q8BBall is beginning our 13th season with Boys U13 (ages 10-13) and U17 (ages 14-17). We train three times a week and play regular games throughout the year with schools and clubs. In June 2018, we plan to

Continued on Page 21

Children helped discover a love of reading

IRead: on the road with Nigeria's first mobile library

LAGOS, Feb 1, (AFP): Funmi Ilori once had a dream about creating the biggest library in Africa. Now she drives vans packed with books to poor areas of Lagos to help children discover a love of reading.

"Readers are what?" she asks about 15 youngsters, sitting on little plastic stools in a classroom in a small converted lorry.

"Leaders!" they shout back in unison.

One of Ilori's iRead Mobile Library vans recently stopped at the Bethel primary school in the working class district of Ifako, in the heart of megacity Lagos.

Inside the school compound, slides and seesaws rust in the humid air. The head teacher, Ruth Aderibigbe, said her 200 or so pupils only have textbooks at their disposal.

"Books cost a lot of money," she said.

When iRead turned up at the school two years ago with its wide selection of books, from toddlers' colouring books to children's novels, plus a few

for adults, she welcomed it in with open arms.
"The children involved in the pro-

gramme now speak and spell better in English," she said.

Inside the van, a young boy aged about 10 held a copy of "Half of a Yellow Sun", the international bestseller by the Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

The book has clearly been wellread: its spine barely held the pages. Adichie last week became em-

broiled in controversy after a French journalist asked her during a visit to Paris whether there were any bookshops in Nigeria.
"I think it reflects very poorly on

French people that you have to ask me that question," she responded, going on to rue what she said was France's racist and colonial view of Africa.

Ilori is aware of the row and understands why the question would offend. But she sees a wider problem and has dedicated herself to trying to resolve it.

"Public libraries are functional in

Nigeria, well, at least in Lagos. But not many people maximise the use of them," she said. "We need to catch new readers from a young age. In rural communities, there are children that have never held a book.

"I advocate for community libraries everywhere. Just as churches are springing up, libraries should be springing up.

Ilori is a former primary school-

teacher who began a book-lending business in 2003. "Books in a basket. I was going

door-to-door," she recalled. Books could be borrowed for just a few hundred naira (a couple of dollars) but her experience led her to realise that few adults in Nigeria's bustling economic hub had the luxury

of having time to read. Ten years after starting the "books in a basket" scheme, she came up with the mobile library idea and applied for funding from a Nigerian government development initiative.

The pitch was successful and landed her 10 million naira, which, with



Books on display in one of the iRead mobile libraries on Jan 30. (AFP)

the exchange rate at the time, was the equivalent of about \$60,000.

With it, she bought a lorry and a small minibus.

Now, thanks to the grant and spon-

sors, she has been able to take on 13 employees, buy 1,900 books and four vans. She visits four to six schools every day, organising reading workshops on evenings and at weekends

for out-of-school children in slum areas with the help of volunteers.

The vans function like real libraries: children choose a book that they read at home, bring it back the following week and write a compulsory

"review" on what it's about. Sade chooses her favourite adventure story, even though she already

knows it off by heart. "Reading is my hobby. Books give me ideas and they help me know bet-

ter," she says. Adinga plumps for "Bioenergy

Insight", a magazine on renewable energy that he found on the shelves.

"Are you sure you're going to read that?" asks one of the volunteers, amused. The young boy pulls a face and puts back the magazine, eventually choosing a comic book.

Afterwards, the schoolchildren, dressed in white and green uniforms with a bow tie for the boys, proudly troop back into class.

Tucked under their arms are books such as "Toy Story" or "Goldilocks and the Three Bears".

Lifestyle



information.

General Continued from Page 20

travel for camp and tournaments in the US. Contact Coach T 97128884 for

Invitation to Grand Mosque: The Visits Department is pleased to invite you to visit the Grand Mosque, which is one of Kuwait's most treasured religious and cultural landmarks to discover the beauty of Islamic arts and architecture. Free guided tours are available all year round on official working days between (9-11 am) and (5-7 pm), within a special tour program designed to cater to the needs of different age groups. The program is as follows:

Reception; Auditorium show; (according to age group); Touring the Mosque; Q & A; Art workshops; (according to age group – between 5 and 18 years old); Snack break; Distribution of the Grand Mosque publications and souvenirs; End of tour.

According to these age groups: Age group: 5 to 9 years old: Morning: 60 visitors max; Evening: 20; 10 to 15 years: Morning: 100 visitors max; Evening: 45; 16 and above: Morning: 140 visitors max, Evening:

Tour language: Arabic- English-French; Arabic (English upon prior request); Arabic- English- French; Arabic (English upon prior request); Arabic- English- French: Arabic (English upon prior request)

■ All visitors are kindly required to abide by the mosque's dress code. Male visitors should wear long pants. Shorts and sleeveless shirts are not allowed. Female visitors: should wear

Rules and Regulations: ■ Please arrive in time for your visit.

head cover and long loose clothing (available at the mosque). Foods and drinks are not allowed

inside the prayer halls. For school visits, teachers are responsible for their students and are required to cooperate with the staff members of the Grand Mosque.

■ Photography is allowed inside the Grand Mosque (please note that disrespectful poses are strictly prohibited). If you would like to book a tour,

please contact us: Tel: 22980813/ 22980815/ 22980812

Email: gmvisits@gmail.com Fax: 22473708

Share your story with Amricani: Do you or any of your family members, acquaintances or friends happen to have a story with the American Missionary hospital in Kuwait (Mustashfa Lemraicani) during the years from 1914-1967, the official period of offering medical services in Kuwait?

Please share with us your story or your memory during those old days by writing the event and sending it to the following email address: Mystory@ darmuseum.org.kw

Notes: 1. Please send your story only to the above mentioned email. Story shared in Instagram, Facebook or Twitter will not be considered. 2. Please write your story or memo-

ry and sign it with your full name, and your contact number. 3. It will be great if you send us your personal photos or those of the

place related to the story (optional). Your story will be part of a new book to be published by DAI.

I am confident that your contributions will be an essential part of the history of Amricani. Share with us!

KIFF anti-drugs campaign: As part of the Fraternity fest, Kuwait India Fraternity Forum (KIFF) is conducting Anti-Drugs Campaign among Indians living in Kuwait. According to the available statistics of Indian Embassy, 60% of the convicted Indians in Kuwaiti Jails are arrested on drug-related cases. The recent cases of death and captives of Indian drug abusers is a threatening news. To defend and to campaign against such social crisis by protecting individuals as well as the society has become obligatory. In this current situation, Kuwait India Fraternity Forum is conducting campaign by distributing handouts, conducting counseling, seminars etc. to educate the Indians living in Kuwait informed President Saifudheen Nalakath in a press release. For



Harding Stowe pours Kava into a bowl to be served at Brooklyn Kava in New York. (AFP)



Alex Crawford kneads Kava powder in water as he makes a batch of Kava to be served at Brooklyn Kava, in New York. (AFP)



A bowl of Lemon Mint Kava served at Brooklyn Kava in New York. (AFP)



Anna Metelina pours Kava into a bowl to be served at Brooklyn Kava in New York. (AFP)

'The drink is very relaxing ... not like drugs'

'Kava' soothing the stress of NY millennials

NEW YORK, Feb 1, (AFP): It's been a mainstay in the South Pacific for thousands of years. Now stressed-out millennial New Yorkers are kissing goodbye to alcohol and gulping down a mildly narcotic drink to ease the pain of long hours, bottleneck commutes and Donald Trump.

Kava — a root ground to powder,

mixed with water and then strained - might taste like muddy water and make fans gag without a fruit juice chaser or blended into a "kavatail," but it's the mood enhancer taking the edge off for those struggling to cope with hectic modern life.

The effects include a mild numbing of the tongue and lips, relaxation and euphoria — feelings in short supply in congested, rat-race New York, a cacophony of noise, sleep deprivation and yelling.

"If any city needs to relax a little bit and calm down, slow down, it's New York," says Harding Stowe, the 31-year-old owner of Brooklyn Kava in the rapidly gentrifying, artistic

neighborhood of Bushwick. "I really think it's going to explode and I think it's starting right now.' Kava may be steeped in tradition and ceremony on Pacific islands such as Fiji, but in the West, it is seen

more details contact: 55062071 or email at kiffkuwait@gmail.com.

NYF offers free yoga classes: NYF Kuwait offers free yoga, breathing, meditation and reiki classes by a well-experienced female yoga teacher for all age groups. Classes are given on the basis of different health problems, stress and other problems by different techniques. Contact: 99315825.

increasingly as a healthier alternative to booze by younger people who want to go out.

"It's very relaxing. It's not like alcohol or drugs," says Brooklyn artist Sabrina Cheng, 26, a recent convert. "I have a very low tolerance for

alcohol anyways. But kava, you can hang here all day, read your book, have the laptop, talk. With teenagers and millenni-

als drinking less alcohol than their parents, entrepreneurs jumping on the bandwagon believe a less boozesoaked future might be just around the corner.

"It's not as cool anymore to go to bars every night," explains Stowe. "People want something new and they want something healthy."

An initial kava boom in the West in the 1990s fueled low-quality exports which - combined with little understanding of the plant led to negative publicity about health concerns and prohibitions in Europe. That all led to a bust.

But while the US Food and Drug

Administration warned in 2002 of a "rare" but potential risk of severe liver injury associated with kavacontaining products, kava is again seeing another boom, and exports from Fiji alone more than doubled from 2012-16.

Safe

"Unlike in the 1990s, the scholarly understanding of the plant is much better. It has been widely studied and it's generally perceived as safe and beneficial," says Zbigniew Dumienski, a researcher at the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

There is a well-established scene in Florida, yet kava has been relatively slow to take root in America's most populous city, where there are only three kava lounges but 10,000 bars, with drinks after work and happy hours part of daily life.

Astonishingly two of the lounges are a short walk from each other in Bushwick, known for its artistic scene and influx of young people drawn by more affordable rents. This is the perfect breeding

SERVED STRAIGHT WITH OR CONC A CHASER OF PINEAPPLE, SINGLE GRAPE FRUIT, OR MANGO JUICE DOUBLE Different types of Kava are listed on the menu at Brooklyn Kava in New

ground for the American kava customer: residents in their mid-20s, embarking on stressful careers, navigating relationships, battling chronic subway delays and, in a Democratic city, dealing with Donald Trump blues.

"I went through quite a lot of anxiety with my previous job and this definitely helped a lot," says Phil Mai, 25, a financial analyst at a media firm in Manhattan, sitting at the bar in House of Kava on Ladies Night with his girlfriend Susie.

"I used to drink alcohol two-three times a week and, on a weekend, sometimes binge," he says. "I think I had my last drink probably like two weeks ago.'

The House of Kava has a string of theme nights to keep people hooked: open-mic nights that bring in rappers, poets and stand-up comics and while most people are in their mid-20s, recently people in their mid-60s have

started stopping by. "I'm from a conservative family and I'm the only liberal, so given the state of the world, that is like the biggest stresser in my life, I would say," says Kellianne Holland, 24, who works for a nonprofit when asked what makes her

Dimly lit, the bar is incredibly mellow. Susie draws. Another woman is buried in a laptop. Someone else is reading and one couple talk softly to one another. There is none of the yelling synonymous with the New York bar scene.

Business is taking off, he says - and it's the same vibe over at Stowe's rival Brooklyn Kava.

When Stowe first opened in February 2016, he initially worried he'd made a mistake.

"People didn't know what kava was," Stowe said.

"Lately, it's just been amazing how slammed it gets," he says believing things really took off about six months ago.

"There are different stressful things that have happened in America, you know with Trump getting elected," he said. "I think all those things have contributed.'

Stowe is now busy planning other locations, collaborations and pop-ups he is talking to both a yoga studio and a meditation studio about selling

So has President Trump helped his business? "I hate to say it, but probably," he says.

Leadership Excellence Course:

The Leadership Excellence Course (LEC) is a course modeled on the Seerah of Rasoolullah who is the best model of leadership for all mankind. The LEC focuses on the lessons that we can learn from the Seerah of Rasoolullah and see how we can apply them in our lives to become winners in this world and the next.

The objectives of the course are 1. Understand what leadership is from the Seerah of Rasoolullah and how to

apply it in our lives today 2. Understand the purpose of our lives and learn to live that purpose with confidence 3. Understand the importance of connecting to Allah and learn how to do it 4. Understand how to leverage your strengths and overcome weaknesses 5. Understand how to articulate your life goal and create a road map to achieve it.

For more information please

Continued on Page 24

What's On

By Jacqueline Bigar

Happy birthday for Friday, February 2, 2018: This year you will be efficient and clear-minded. You often feel inspired, especially when eyeing possible investments Confusion surrounds you, as many people seem to be dealing with all kinds of issues that arise. You have a lot on your plate. If you are single, you will take your time warming up to others. Know that you will make the right choice for you. If you are attached, the two of you might not always agree on all facets of your life together. Honor each other's differences. VIRGO can be very fussy about financial details.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult.

Capricorn - (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

**** Read between the lines. Sometimes what isn't said can be more significant than

what is said. Your intuition will kick in when dealing with others; you know when they are not being authentic. Be willing to make an adjustment, if necessary. Tonight: Look beyond the obvious.

Aquarius - (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

***** One-on-one relating takes you down a unique path. How others spend money, even when they're just out and about, is likely to be considerably different from how you do. Understand how important it is to keep your finances out of your social interactions. Tonight: Be a duo.

Pisces - (Feb 19 - Mar 20)

**** You might not appreciate everything you hear right now. How you see a personal matter could change after you observe a loved one. Know how much is to be gained by respecting the differences between you. Tonight: Accept an invitation to loosen up

Aries - (Mar 21 - Apr 19)

**** Your intuition carries you far when handling a daily matter. How you feel could change radically if you look inward for answers. Bypass a control game. Others look to you for leadership, but you'll want to defer to someone else for now. Tonight: At a fun

Apr 20 - May 20)

***** Your creativity takes you down a new path that allows greater give-and-take. You see a personal matter differently from how someone else expects it go. Don't allow yourself to be lured into doing something you don't want to do. Tonight: Make the right

Gemini - (May 21 - June 20)

*** You might opt to stay close to home. Stress has been high, and you will start to witness the effects soon if you don't take a break from all the uproar. Understand what is happening with a loved one; you could have gone too far trying to push this person. Tonight: Play it low-key.

Cancer - (June 21 - July 22)

**** Reach out to someone you care about. Be willing to listen to your intuition. You might want to bounce an idea or two off of someone else. The feedback you get will help you see the consequences of proceeding in a different direction. Tonight: Favorite spot with a favorite person.

Leo - (July 23 - Aug 22)

*** You might become possessive when you realize how far off you are from reaching a financial agreement with someone. Your vision does not fit with this person's ideas; you come from very different points of view about investing. Tonight: Out among the

Visco - (Aug 23 - Sept 22)

**** Your personality melts others' resistance. Be more forthright when dealing with a partner and his or her ideals, and know that you aren't coming from the same space. Avoid trying to change this person. Acceptance leads to a more successful relationship. Tonight: As you like it.

Libra - (Sept 23 - Oct 22)

**** You could be confused about a work-related matter. As much as you would like to get a clearer sense of direction, it might be difficult because you and an associate are quite different. You sense that a big change is in the offing. Embrace it! Tonight: Be willing to play it low-key.

Scarpia - (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

***** Your expectations could be different from someone else's. Emphasize what is possible rather than give in to one of your fantasies. Friends surround you wherever you go, especially in the late afternoon. Tonight Accept a special invitation, but only if you

Sacittarius - (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

***** Whether last-minute responsibilities keep you at work late or you simply are choosing to accept more responsibility, know that the payoff will be worth it. Compassion flows around you at home, at work or out in the community. Revise your budget, if need be. Tonight: Out late.

Born today: Novelist Ayn Rand (1905), singer/songwriter Shakira (1977), novelist James Joyce (1882)

home decor



art on wall

Supplies: Canvas

Pencil Blue and green paints

Instructions: Use a yardstick to space out equal vertical lines

with a pencil. Then use the corner of a little card to create those angled peaks to mimic the prismlike shapes. Fill each shape in with a variety of shades of blue and green. If you know how to mix colours then mix them and fill in some of the space with it.

indoor gardening



fittonia verschaffeltii

Fittonia verschaffeltii is a species of tropical plant native to Peru. Its stem is covered in hair. The veins of the leaves are usually white, but colors vary with cultivar. Its low-spreading habit makes it ideal for dish gardens and terrariums, where it thrives with the help of high humidity.

Site: Brightly lit spot. Keep well away from di-

Temperature: Average room temperatures 65-

Water: Keep soil constantly moist, but not soggy. Plant will collapse if it dries out.

beauty tips



smooth feet

1 cup lemon juice Cinnamon (for smell) 2 tablespoons (or less) olive oil 1/4 cup of milk Water

Take lemon Juice, cinnamon, olive oil, milk, and water you can make a wash that leaves skin refreshed and fragrant (the amount of water does not matter). If you do not like the cinnamon smell you can replace it with another spice, perfume, or flower petals such as roses.

After you make it, you can put it in a tub where you can soak your feet or body. Next dry your feet or rinse them with water and a mild soap. After a few weeks of doing this your skin will be silky smooth.

taste buds



tortellini soup

Ingredients: 1 tbsp olive oil;1/2 cup onion, chopped; 2 cloves garlic, minced; 1/2 tsp dried oregano; 1 can diced tomatoes, with juices; 4 cups vegetable broth (or chicken broth); 9 oz tortellini; 3 cups fresh baby spinach; Salt and pep-

Method: In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and cook until beginning to soften. Add in garlic and stirring frequently, just until fragrant. Mix in the oregano and diced tomatoes. Add the broth to the pot. Bring the mixture to a boil. Add the tortellini to the pot and cook according to the package directions. One minute before the tortellini is fully cooked, stir in the spinach. Bemove from the heat. Seastir in the spinach. Remove from the heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

> emergency number 112 **Civil ID info: 1889988**

Dear Abby White

Pregnant worker fears reprisal from boys club

By Abigail Van Buren

Dear Abby: A few months ago, I informed my bosses I was pregnant. Within a week, they were trying to fire me and blame it on other things at work that made no sense and hadn't been issues before. They made me sign a letter of reprimand in our first meeting about the "issues.

I spoke with a co-worker who told me she had a similar experience when she announced her pregnancy. I work for a company with a "boys club" mentality, so I didn't try to speak to HR because I was afraid for my already threatened job.



mal. I actually got a raise a month later. Last week, I learned I'm pregnant again. My husband and I are excited about it, but I'm scared to tell my bosses for fear I'll have a repeat Abigail

A couple weeks later, I

miscarried and everything

at work went back to nor-

of last time. When should I tell them about my upcoming arrival? And is there anything I can do to protect my job? I have been looking for employment elsewhere, but haven't found anything yet. I need this job or else I would have already left it.

— Scared in Utah

Dear scared: Pregnancy is a natural condition and you should not be punished for it. The first thing you should do is doc-ument everything that happened during your first pregnancy. Be sure to include what your co-worker told you happened to her, and how — after your miscarriage — all your problems at the office disappeared. Then schedule an appointment

with an attorney to ask how you can protect yourself in the months to come.

Dear Abby: I have cheated, lied and more. I have made a lot of changes in my life for the better since then, but we all know I'm still a sinner. I have gained a lot of weight over the years, and I hear about it often from my husband and two boys, mostly my sons. My boys are rude and disrespectful to me, and my husband says nothing. They make me feel ugly and worthless.

I know I haven't been the best wife or mother. I thought I was doing better, but I guess not. I'm tired of the name-calling and disrespect, I know I have made mistakes, but must I be put down all the time? One day I feel OK, the next I'm down again. Please help me.

— Feels ugly in Texas Dear feels ugly: It appears that although your marriage is ongoing, your husband is still punishing you for your "sins" and has enlisted the help of your sons in doing it. I urge you to look into family counseling for all of you. The environment in which your boys are growing up is unhealthy because they are being encouraged to disrespect women. If it's allowed to continue, they will have relationships and marriages just like your own — ugly and contentious. If you won't seek counseling for yourself, please do it

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles,

(Source: Universal Uclick)

Site for checking travel ban www.kuwaitcourts.gov.kw/mojweb/NGeneral/Main.jsp

■ MISK offers EC processing service: Those who do not have valid passport will have to obtain Emergency Certificate

from Indian Embassy Kuwait. A special voluntary service center at Salmiya Indian Model School on behalf of MISK will render the EC Processing Services.

Date: from Jan 31 till Feb 15 (2:30 pm

till 5:00 pm) except Friday and Saturday. Venue: Salmiya Indian Model School (Block # 12, Mughira Bin Shuiba Street, Salmiya. Contact # 55130271/97285358 / 99561786

■ ISF opens amnesty helpline: Indian Social Forum Kuwait (ISF) highly appreciated the new amnesty declared by Ministry of Interior. This will help thousands of expatriates including Indians illegally living in Kuwait due to various reasons.

ISF urged all illegal residents especially Indian citizens to utilize this opportunity either to legalize their residency or to leave the country as soon as pos-

Indian Social Forum has opened Amnesty Helpline in various languages to assist the beneficiaries of amnesty during the amnesty period from Jan 29 to Feb

The on call/WhatsApp support helpline service is available in English (66624501/65962683), Hindi/ (66624501/0030267) (65597993/97594928), Telugu Tamil (69626284/ Urdu (97594928), 99133474), Kannada/Beary/Tulu (99502159/65962683) and Malayalam (99083007/66624501)

■ CASS 'Onattukara Fest 2018': Chettickulangara Amma Seva Samathi Kuwait (CASS Kuwait) conducting 'Onattukara Fest 2018' at Indian Central School, Abbasiya, on Friday, Feb 2, 2018 from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm onwards. The whole day celebration is a collection of Onattukara traditional cultural programs that includes Kuthiyottam — Kuthiyotta Achariyan Vijayaraghava kurup and team, Sangeetha Sudha — Kayamkulam Babu the famous Idea Star singer frame,Thayampaka — Neeleswaram Marar Brothers, Pancharimelam-Chamayam Brothers and traditional Kanji Sadhaya.

For more details please contact: Anil 99068763, Pramod — 98007684, laneesh — 66610405, Jothy Raj — Haneesh 98752200

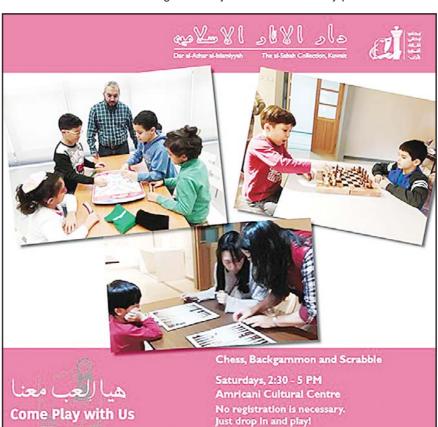
■ FBC tournament: Filipino Badminton Committee (FBC) is inviting all badminton enthusiast in Kuwait to join their regular badminton tournament being held every Friday from 8 am to 7 pm at Kuwait Disabled Sports Club, Bin Khaldoun Hawalli. Over 10 badminton courts are now available for badminton practices and tournament and it is open for all nationalities and from different badminton organizations. Exclusive-private court are

also available on per hour rental. For

more information, please contact Dr Chie

Umandap - 97197268

■ Arnis/Eskrima training: Eskrimador-Kuwait a member of Cacoy Doce Pares World Federation now opens a new batch of training. Learn the Philippine national sports, which is Arnis/Eskrima with the authentic style and techniques. Training schedule will be every Friday from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm @ Kaifan Sports Complex-



A flyer of the event



A flyer of the events

Karate Gym. Text or call #50292148-

■ Free IFRA coaching classes: Indian Football Referees Association (IFRA) will es for existing referees, new recruits, those aspiring to be referees and even those who would like to learn about the laws of the game at IEAS - Salmiya (Don

be starting free refresher/coaching class-

Ftems for the What's On page can be sent directly to the Arab Times, P.O. Box 2270, 13023, Safat or faxed to 24818267 or e-mail to analtimes@

arabtimesonline.com.

All items on this page are published as a courtesy to the public. These announcements can include birthday greetings, weddings, social functions or any other non-commercial events. Photographs of all events are welcome.

Bosco).

Classes will be from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm every Friday.

Those interested may call 99519439 or get in touch with any IFRA member for registration.

■ Tagalog Khutba for Filipinos: The

Ministry of Awqaf, Islam Presentation Committee, & Kuwait Philippine Cultural Center (KPC Center) invites all Filipino Muslim & Muslima to hear Khutba (Sermon) in Tagalog every Friday at Marzouq Al-Badr Mosque, Abu Bakr Al-Siddeeq St (at the back of Ambassador Supermarket and SM Supermarket, near Salhiya Police Station & Kuwait Airways Bldg) in Kuwait City. There will be a community started and lunch after Friday prayers at KPC Center in Farwaniya. For further information, please call KPC Center, Tel 4712574.

■ St Paul's Church weekly activities:

English worship services on Fridays at 10.30 am and on Sundays at 6.30 pm. The Friday English service has separate sessions for children and youth. A Mandarin language speaking congregations meets separately on Fridays at 10.30 am in the Youth Centre at St Paul's. A combined service with the English and Mandarin language congregations is held on the first Friday of every month. A family service is held on the second Friday of every month with presentations from different organs of the church. The Church of Pakistan has services in English every Thursday at St Paul's at 5.35 pm and for Urdu language speaking members every Friday at Diwaniya of the NECK Centre, Kuwait City at 5.45 pm. Please contact Fr Michael Mbona on mobile 65960781 or call at Church house on 23985929 or email to chaplain@stpaulskuwait.com or mrmbona@gmail.com For Mandarin speaking congregation contact Revd Zhu Peijin on 99551783 and her email address is greenolivettc@hotmail.com

Contact person: Fr Michael Mbona Mobile: 65960781 Email: mrmbona@ gmail.com

■ Redeemed Christian Church: The (HOD Parish) worship in English.

Celebration Service: Friday 9 am - 11 am; Divine encounter: Sunday, 6:30 pm 8:30 pm; Digging Deep (Bible studies): Tuesday, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm; Night vigil every last Friday of the month from 10

pm. Venue: New Mishref. For more information and direction please call 9927-6603, 6557-7482. Email: rccghouseofdavidq8@gmail.com

What's On

Health

Concerns over Philip Morris trials

Scientists urge Britain to fortify flour with folic acid

LONDON, Feb 1, (RTRS): Britain's failure to legislate to make food producers fortify flour with folic acid to help prevent babies being born with birth defects is based on flawed analysis and should be reversed, scientists said on Wednesday.

Urging the UK to follow more than 80 other countries, including the United States, who have mandatory fortification, the scientists said there was no need for an upper limit on folate intake because there is no risk of harmful over-

Deficiency in folate, by contrast, can cause pregnant women to have babies with serious birth defects called anencephaly and spina bifida. Also known as neural tube defects, the conditions affect 1 in 500-1,000 pregnancies in Britain.

Folic acid is a synthetic form of the B vitamin folate, which is found in asparagus, broccoli and dark leafy vegetables. Folic acid can be taken as pills or added to staple foods such as flour and cereals.

In countries that have introduced mandatory folic acid fortification, neural tube defects in babies have fallen by as much as 50 percent, according to experts from Queen Mary University of London and the School of Advanced Study at University of London, who published a study on the issue on Wednesday.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates the cost of folic acid fortification at around 1.0 cent per person per

"Failing to fortify flour with folic acid to prevent neural tube defects is like having a polio vaccine and not using it," Nicholas Wald of Queen Mary's Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine told a briefing in London.

He said that on average every day in Britain, two women terminate pregnancies because of neural tube defects, and every week two women give birth to an affected

"It's a completely avoidable tragedy," said Joan Morris, who works with Wald.

She said that from 1998, when the US introduced mandatory folic acid fortification, to 2017, an estimated 3,000 neural tube defects could have been prevented if the UK had adopted the same level of

In the UK, white flour is already fortified with iron, calcium and the B vitamins niacin and thiamin. Yet despite recommendations from experts, Britain has not introduced mandatory folic acid fortification, partly due to concerns it might lead to some people having too high a folate intake.

However Wednesday's new research, published in the jour-nal Public Health Reviews, found those concerns were unjustified.

"With the upper limit removed there is no scientific or medical reason for delaying the introduction of mandatory folic acid fortification," Wald said.

Also:

WASHINGTON: Two Democratic US senators said they have fresh concerns over clinical trials conducted by Philip Morris International Inc as it seeks US clearance to market its iQOS electronic tobacco product as less risky than cigarettes, according to statements both senators provided to Reuters.

Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois and Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut cited reports that showed problems with the trials that supported Philip Morris's application to the US Food and Drug Administration, including a Reuters investigation published in December.

The Reuters story identified shortcomings in the training and professionalism of some of the lead investigators in the clinical trials. Former Philip Morris employees and contractors also described irregularities in those experiments.

"Reuters' reporting, and the serious concerns raised by FDA's advisory committee, make clear that this product fails to meet the requirements set out under the Tobacco Control Act for modified risk claims," Durbin said in a statement



Indian health workers look on as Angie Sibthorp (right), member of Rotary Club gives biscuits to a child after he receives polio vaccine drops on the occasion of National Immunisation Day in Amritsar. Across the country, children of less than five years old will receive polio vaccine drops as part of a program

Brain-wasting disease affects 50mn people worldwide

Potential blood test for Alz's shows promise

TOKYO/MELBOURNE, Feb 1, (RTRS): Researchers in Japan and Australia say they have made important progress in developing a blood test that could in future help doctors detect who might go on to get Alzheimer's disease.

In a study published in the journal Nature, the scientists said the test, which can detect a toxic protein known as amyloid beta, linked to Alzheimer's, was more than 90 percent accurate in research involving around 370 people.

Dementia, of which Alzheimer's

is the most common form, affects close to 50 million people worldwide and is expected to affect more than 131 million by 2050, according to the non-profit campaign group Alzheimer's Disease International.

Currently, doctors use brain scans or invasive cerebrospinal fluid testing, also known as a spinal tap, to try and see whether patients have a build up of amyloid beta in the brain. But these tests are invasive, expensive and may only show results when the disease has already started to prog-

Despite decades of scientific research, there is no treatment that can slow the progression of Alzheimer's. Current drugs can do no more than ease some of the symptoms.

Having a simple, low-cost blood test could make it easier for pharmaceutical companies to find enough people at risk of developing Alzheimer's to test potential new drugs to fight the disease, said Katsuhiko Yanagisawa, who coled the Nature study at the Japanese National Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology.

Since Alzheimer's disease is

thought to start developing years before patients have any symptoms of memory loss, experts say an important factor in finding an effective treatment will be the ability to accurately detect signs of the disease

"You have got to walk before you run. You have to learn to diagnose the disease directly before you can hope to see the effect of therapeutic intervention. And that's where the real value in this test will come," said Colin Masters, a professor at the University of Melbourne who co-led

The study involved 252 Australian and 121 Japanese patients aged between 60 and 90 years.

Scientists not directly involved in the study said it made an important step, but now needed to be repli-

"If (it) can be repeated in a larger number of people, this test will give us an insight into changes occurring in the brain that relate to Alzheimer's disease," said Mark Dallas, a lecturer in Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience at Britain's University

of Reading.
Abdul Hye at King's College London's Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience said the test was still a long way from being able to be used in doctors' clinics.

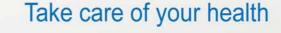
"The approach of obtaining the results is still very complicated (and) in its current form, the methodology is not practical in a clinical setting, he said

John Hardy, a professor of neuroscience at University College London, said it was a "hopeful study which could have a very positive impact on diagnostic accuracy.'

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Couch slouch

Trump's SOTU fails to match Obama's

Diane Lane, Greg Kinnear join 'House of Cards' final season

LOS ANGELES, Feb 1, (RTRS): Production has resumed on the sixth and final season of "House of Cards," Netflix announced Wednes-

Production on the series was originally shut down in October after allegations of sexual assault and harassment were made against series star Kevin Spacey. Shortly after production was suspended, Netflix and studio Media Rights Capital (MRC) announced that they were severing ties with Spacey, with Netflix also cancelling a planned Gore Vidal biopic in

which Spacey was to star.
Season 6 of the political thriller will consist of eight episodes, with Robin Wright starring. Michael Kelly, Jayne Atkinson, Patricia Clarkson, Constance Zimmer, Derek Cecil, Campbell Scott and Boris McGiver will also star. The show is one of Netflix's original breakout hits, having been nominated for 53 Emmys throughout its run.

In addition, Diane Lane and Greg Kinnear have joined the final season. The details of their roles are being kept under wraps, but it is known the two will play siblings.

Lane was nominated for an Academy Award in 2003 for her leading role in the film "Unfaithful." She has also been nominated for two Emmys and three Golden Globes. She is known for roles in films like "Under the Tuscan Sun," "Chaplin," and the recent DC universe films as Martha Kent. She will also appear in the upcoming Amazon series "The Romanoffs."

Kinnear is known for roles in films such as "As Good As It Gets," for which he was nominated for an Academy Award, "Little Miss Sunshine," and the miniseries "The Kennedys.

Lane is repped by UTA and Weintraub Tobin. Kinnear is repped by WME and attorney Rick Genow.

"SciJinks," the all-new science prank show hosted by "The Big Bang Theory" star Johnny Galecki, will premiere on Discovery and Science Channel this spring. Galecki, along with **Tamara Robertson** and **Jason Latimer**, will test out science on the unsuspecting, drawing from chemistry, physics, technology, engineering and more, with never-before-seen pranks that will introduce audiences to remarkable and unusual scientific discoveries. "SciJinks" is produced by Alcide Bava Productions and A. Smith & Co Productions for Discovery Channel and Science Channel. Galecki and Andrew Haas are executive producers for Alcide Bava Productions. Arthur Smith, Frank Sinton and Anthony Storm are executive producers for A. Smith & Co Productions. Caroline Perez is executive producer for Science Channel.

E! has given the greenlight for a new one-hour, eight-episode docu-series "Model Squad," which follows some of today's supermodels Daniela Braga, Olivia Culpo, Hannah Ferguson, Ping Hue, Nadine Leopold, Caroline Lowe, Ashley Moore, Shanina Shaik, and Devon Windsor. A preview special "Model Squad: Fashion Week" will air Feb 12 at 10 pm ET/PT. "Model Squad" is produced by Trooper Entertainment in association with Lionsgate and co-produced by IMG

Tracy Morgan, Ann Dowd, Rachel Brosnahan, Anna Chlumsky, Robin Thede, Jane Pauley, Lesley Stahl, and Ken Burns are among the presenters set for the Feb 11 Writers Guild Awards ceremony at New York's Edison Ballroom. Amber Řuffin, of NBC's "Late Night with Seth Meyers" is hosting the WGA East's edition of the scribe tribe kudos,

12 Strong

which run simultaneously with the WGA West's presentation at the Beverly Hilton.

CBS has given a pilot order to a multi-camera comedy that hails from **Tim McAuliffe** and **Austen Earl**, Variety has learned.

The untitled series follows a young married couple whose evenings have become comfortable and routine. Their lives are completely upended when a young musician moves into their spare bedroom and brings with him the complications of being an up and coming mega popstar, and sometimes even the

Both McAuliffe and Earl will serve as writers and executive producers. Ben Winstonwriter and executive producer on "The Late Late Show with James Corden" and part of Corden's Fulwell 73 production company will executive produce along with 3 Arts Entertainment's Michael Rotenberg and Jonathan Berry. CBS Television Studios will produce. Earl and Fulwell 73 are under overall deals at CBS Television Studios.

Earl is a writer and co-executive producer on the current CBS sitcom "9JKL," roles he also held on fellow CBS show "The Great Indoors." He also served as a writer on CBS "The Millers," which was created by Greg Garcia. McAuliffe most recently worked as a writer and executive producer on Fox's "The Last Man on Earth." He was previously a writer on "Late Night with Jimmy Fallon," with his other TV credits including "Maya & Marty," "The Office" and "Up All Night."

McAuliffe is repped by UTA and 3 Arts. Earl is repped by UTA and Management 360.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Viewership of US President **Donald Trump**'s first State of the Union address is down slightly in the Nielsen ratings compared to his first televised address to Congress last February as well as President Barack Obama's first such address.

On broadcast, Tuesday's coverage of the speech drew 7.1 million viewers on NBC, 7 million on CBS, 5.4 million on ABC, and 3.6 million on Fox for a combined 23.1 million

Fox News topped both its cable and broadcast competition by a wide margin with 11.5 million viewers tuning into the network's coverage of the speech, notching the highest-rated State of the Union address in the history of cable news. CNN was second with 3.1 million, with MSNBC drawing 2.7 million. Fox Business Network drew 572,000 viewers. Spanish-language broadcasters Univision and Telemundo added 2 million and 1.4 million respectively. The speech was also carried live on Estrella and PBS.

In total, President Trump's address drew 45.6 million viewers across broadcast and cable, according to the final Nielsen tally. That number does not include those who livestreamed the speech.

Obama's first State of the Union in 2010 drew 48 million viewers across broadcast and cable, while his first address before a joint session of Congress in February 2009 drew 52.4 million viewers.

In metered market households, Trump's speech drew a 4.4 rating on NBC, a 4.3 on CBS, a 3.5 on ABC, and a 2.6 on Fox for a combined 14.8 rating. Trump's first address to a joint session of Congress in February last year drew a 16 rating in metered market households on broadcast and ultimately drew 47.7 million viewers when cable news coverage was calculated.



A photo from the event.

ESF at Art Olympiad

Once again Middle and Upper school Art students at The English School Fahaheel attended the Art Olympiad 2018 at The

Grand Avenues. Students were accompanied by Art Dept

ill it rain? Will it snow? Not even the weatherman seems to know!



StoryCraft's Weather Series

starts Monday, 5 February at 4 PM (5, 12, 19 February and 5 March) Amricani Cultural Centre

To register or for more information, email education@darmuseum.org.kw

A flyer of the event.

18:15, 20:15 (Daily Exc Fri)

19:30, 21:25, 01:15 (Fri)

22:00, 00:05 (Daily Exc Fri)

(Daily Exc Fri, Sat, Mon)

14:20, 16:55, 19:35 (**Fri**) 11:45, 14:20, 16:55,

11:30, 15:45, 20:00,

15:45, 20:00, 22:00,

19:00, 21:00

00:05 (Fri)

18:45, 20:45

16:55, 19:35

19:35 (Sat)

19:35 (Mon)

17:30, 20:05

13:00, 13:20, 15:05,

15:15, 17:05, 19:00,

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15:05, 15:15, 17:05,

19:00, 20:00, 21:00,

00:50, 01:00 (Daily Exc Fri)

23:00, 00:50, 01:00 (Fri)

23:05

General

visit www.leckuwait.com or call 99514995 / 66363310.

wives of Americans are welcomed.

Continued from Page 21

AWL registration: If you would like to join the American Women's League (AWL), please call 99039723 or 94067999 or email: kuwaitawl@yahoo.com. All American women and

Ugandans register with UIK: Are you a Ugandan living and working in Kuwait? Would you like to get in touch with other Ugandans in Kuwait both socially and professionally? Then please get in touch with us. We would like to invite you to register with the Ugandans in Kuwait (UIK) association, an informal organization of Ugandans living and working in Kuwait. The purpose of this exercise is to get together as Ugandans and to consider taking the first steps to establishing a more formal organisation. This association is voluntary. It is designed to create a forum for Ugandans in Kuwait to foster a sense of community, to communicate more effectively with each other and to encourage Ugandans out here to work together. We are also planning a celebration to mark 50 years of Ugandan's Independence this year. If you have any questions regarding this association or if you are interested in registering, then please send us an email at ugandansinkuwait@gmail.com. We hope to hear from you soon.

Free drum music classes: Free professional drum music classes are available at

Salmiya for all age groups from beginners to advanced by a well experienced drum teacher. For more details: 94974295.

Experience Science for Adults: Registration is now open for Experience Science for

Why should kids have all the fun?! The five week programme will be held on Saturday from 10:00 am-11:30 am at the Yarmouk Cultural Centre.

Registration is limited to 16. You may register at either the Amricani Cultural Centre, Sunday to Thursday 10:00-3:00 or the Yarmouk Cultural Centre, Sunday to Thursday 10:00-6:00. For more information, please email:education@darmuseum.org.kw

TIES Center classes: TIES Center is conducting a series of classes about some of the Prophets and Messengers of God who strove very hard to spread monotheism and teach their respective peoples how to worship God. Their message was not only spiritual; they also taught people how to conduct their daily lives and develop the living conditions on earth.

In this series, we will focus on the following prophets: Adam, Nouh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abra-

ham), Ayoub (Job), Yousuf (Joseph), Mousa (Moses), and Eisa (Jesus) — may peace, mercy and blessings of Allah (to Whom all might and majesty is ascribed) be upon them all. We will not only focus on historical facts,

but will also deduce some important lessons whose application in our daily interactions and chores determine our success and salvation. Join us every Thursday at 7 pm to learn

about the life and times of those messengers of firm resolve. The TIES Center is the social and educational hub for English Speaking Muslims in Kuwait. For more information, please call 25231015 or e-mail info@tiescenter.net or visit www.tiescenter.net.

Bridge game: Bridge tournament is being held every Sunday and Wednesday at 20:00 hours, played at the Graduates Club, next to Kuwait Engineering Society. Interested Bridge pairs or individual players please contact Mohammed Merchant, Tel: 24815622, 24841158,

W highlights

Cinema

Muhalab

Sharqia

Avenues

Cinema programme from Thursday 1/2/2018 to Wednesday 7/2/2018

	12 Strong
360°	22:10 16::00 (Daily Exc Fri) 16:15 (Fri)
Fanar	15:30
Avenues	14:55
All The	Money In The World
360°	12:45, 20:40, 23:15 (Daily Exc Fri)
Avenues	20:40, 23:15 (Fri) 12:15, 21:35, 22:40, (Daily Exc Fri) 21:35, 22:40 (Fri)
	Coco
Avenues	16:45
Day Of	The Dead: Bloodline
360°	17:40, 23:55 (Daily Exc Fri, Sat) 13:50, 17:40, 23:55 (Fri, Sat)
Avenues	15:00, 19:00, 23:00
	Dead Awake
360°	00:50
Fanar	01:10
Avenues	01:15
D	en Of Thieves
360°	11:50, 14:00, 14:20, 16:35, 16:55, 19:30, 21:35, 22:05, 00:10, 00:45 (Daily Exc Fri) 14:00, 14:20, 16:35, 16:55, 19:30, 21:35,
Bairaq	22:05, 00:10, 00:45 (Fri) 11:45, 19:15, 21:45, 00:15 (Daily Exc Thu, Fri, Sat) 19:15, 21:45, 00:15
Fanar	(Thu, Fri, Sat) 12:15, 14:45, 17:15, 22:15, 00:45 (Daily Exc Fri)

(Daily Exc Fri)

00:45 (Fri)

Muhalab

14:45, 17:15, 22:15,

11:30, 14:00, 16:30,

19:00, 21:30, 00:05

14:00, 16:30, 19:00,

(Daily Exc Fri)

21:30, 00:05 (Fri) 12:30, 19:30, 22:00 Sharqia 00:30 (Daily Exc Fri) Laila 19:30, 22:00, 00:30 (Fri) Marina 13:05, 15:30, 15:35, Avenues 18:10, 20:15, 20:45, **Maze Runner: The Death Cure** 23:15, 00:40 (Daily Exc Fri) 15:30, 15:35, 18:10, 20:15, 20:45, 23:15, 00:40 (Fri) Laila 20:35 12:00, 14:00, 21:45, Marina 00:15 (Daily Exc Thu, Fri, Sat) 14:00, 21:45, 00:15 (Thu, Fri, Sat) **Ferdinand** 12:15, 16:30 360 (Daily Exc Fri) 16:30 (Fri) 18:00 13:30, 17:45 **Insidious: The Last Key** 00:40 13:15, 18:30 (Daily Exc Fri) 11:35, 13:10, 15:35, 19:10, 20:25, 22:50 (Daily Exc Fri) 15:35, 19:10, 20:25,

Bairag 360 Jumanji: Welcome To The Jungle 22:50 (Fri) 18:30 (Fri) Bairaq 11:30, 14:00, 16:30, 19:00 (Daily Exc Fri) 14:00, 16:30, 19:00 (Fri) Fanar 12:00, 14:30, 17:00, 19:45 (Daily Exc Fri) 14:30, 17:00, 19:45 (Fri) Sharqia 12:15, 14:45, 18:15 (Daily Exc Fri) 13:30, 14:45, 18:30 (Fri) Avenues 14:15, 19:20 11:55, 14:20, 15:15, 17:40, 19:05, 00:10 (Daily Exc Wed, Fri, Sat) 11:55, 14:20, 15:15, 18:00, 19:05, 00:10 (Wed)

14:20, 15:15, 17:40,

19:05, 00:10 (Fri)

Laila 15:40, 20:55, 23:45 13:05. 18:50. 21:40 Marina 00:30 (Daily Exc Fri) 12:10, 15:00, 17:15, 17:50, 20:40, 22:00, 360° 23:30 (**Daily Exc Fri**) 13:30, 18:50, 21:40, 00:30 (Fri) 15:00, 17:15, 17:50, 20:40, 22:00, 23:30 (Fri) 12:30, 15:15, 21:20, Bairag 00:05 (Daily Exc Fri) 15:15, 21:20, 00:05 (Fri) 12:45, 18:05, 21:00, Fanar 360° 23:45 (Daily Exc Fri) 18:05, 21:00, 23:45 (Fri) Muhalab 13:30, 19:15, 22:00, 00:15 (Tue, Wed, Sun) 13:30, 19:15, 00:15 (Thu) 13:30, 22:00, 00:15 (Sat, Mon) Fanar 12:45, 15:30, 20:45, Sharqia 23:30 (Daily Exc Fri) 15:45, 20:50, 23:35 (Fri) 11:30, 16:35, 21:40 Avenues 00:30 (Daily Exc Fri) 12:25, 20:00, 23:05 (Daily Exc Wed, Fri, Sat) 12:55, 15:40, 18:35, 21:25, 00:15 (Daily Exc Fri) 12:25, 20:30, 23:30 (Wed) 15:40, 18:35, 21:25, 00:15 (Fri) 16:35, 21:40, 00:30 (Fri) 20:00, 23:05 (Fri) 12:05, 20:40, 23:30 (Sat) Laila 15:30 Marina Marina 13:00, 21:00, 23:45 (Daily Exc Fri) 21:00, 23:45 (Fri) Okdat El Khawaga (Arabic Film) 360° 360° 14:30, 18:45, 20:45, 22:45 Bairag 20:15, 22:15, 00:30

19:20, 21:15, 23:10

11:55, 14:20, 18:15,

16:00. 19:15 (Daily Exc Fri)

13:30, 16:00, 19:15 (Fri)

19:05, 00:10 (Sat)

18:15

Phantom Thread Avenues **Proud Mary** Muhalab Avenues

20:30, 22:30, 00:30 (Daily Exc Fri) 13:40, 20:30, 22:30, 00:30 (Fri) 11:40, 16:15, 22:15, 00:45 (Daily Exc Thu, Fri) 11:40, 16:15, 22:15, 01:05 (Thu) 23:20, 01:00 (Fri) 11:40, 13:35, 14:10, 18:05, 18:20, 20:20, 22:20, 22:45, 00:25 (Daily Exc Fri) 13:35, 14:10, 18:05, 18:20, 20:20, 22:20, 22:45, 00:25 (Fri) 12:00, 16:45, 22:45, 00:45 (Daily Exc Fri) 16:45, 22:45, 00:45 (Fri) Slumber 15:50, 22:00, 01:15 (Daily Exc Fri, Sat) 13:40, 15:50, 22:00, 01:15 (Fri)

11:55, 15:50, 22:00,

16:05, 23:40(Fri) **The Greatest Showman** 360° 19:45 **The Post** 360° 18:00 **Throne Of Elves** 12:30, 14:45, 17:00, 360 19:15 (Daily Exc Fri) 14:45, 17:00, 19:15 (Fri) Bairaq 14:15, 17:00 (Daily Exc Fri, Sat) 12:00, 14:15, 17:00 (Thu, Sat) 11:35, 13:45, 16:00, Fanar 18:15 (Daily Exc Fri) 13:45, 16:00, 18:15 (Fri) Muhalab 12:30, 14:45, 17:00 (Daily Exc Fri, Sat, Mon) 14:30, 16:45 (Fri) 12:15, 14:30, 16:45 (Sat, Mon) Sharqia 15:00, 17:15 11:40, 13:55, 16:10, 18:25 (Daily Exc Fri) 13:55, 16:10, 18:25 (Fri) 14:45, 17:00, 18:30 Marina (Daily Exc Fri, Sat) 12:30, 14:45, 17:00, 18:30 (Thu, Sat)

01:15 (Sat)

Fanar

Sharqia

360°

Fanar

Avenues

14:00, 21:30, 23:15,

13:30, 00:30 (Fri)

17:15, 23:00, 00:45

13:00, 17:00, 21:00,

01:00 (Daily Exc Fri)

13:40, 17:00, 21:00,

01:00 (Fri)

21:25, 23:35

13:30 (Fri)

11:45, 15:45

(Daily Exc Thu, Fri)

12:45, 16:45 (Thu)

12:00, 16:05, 23:40

(Daily Exc Fri)

13:30 (**Fri**)

The Commuter

01:00 (Daily Exc Thu, Fri)

15:00, 19:00, 00:45 (Thu)

Tiger Zinda Hai (Hindi Film) 15:20 Ajial 15:35, 21:35 (Tue, Wed, Sun) 15:35, 18:35 (Thu) 18:30 (Tue, Wed, Sun) Fanar Avenues 20:40 (Daily Exc Sat)

Wonder

18:20

360°

Touch Chesi Chudu (Telugu) 18:35 (Tue, Wed, Sun) Ajial

15:00, 20:40 (Sat)

22:00 (Thu) 15:35, 18:35, 23:35 (Fri, Sat, Mon) 21:45 (Thu) Fanar 15:30, 18:30, 21:30 (Fri) 18:30 (Sat, Mon) Muhalab 22:00 (Thu) 13:30, 16:30, 19:00, 22:00 (Fri)

Carbon (Malayalam)

19:00 (Sat, Mon)

15:30, 21:45 (Daily Exc Fri) Ajial 15:30, 18:30, 21:30 (Thu) 16:00 (Daily Exc Fri) Plaza 16:00, 22:00 (Thu) Aadu 2 (Malayalam Film)

16:00, 19:00 (Thu) Ajial

Queen (Malayalam Film) 15:45, 18:45 Ajial (Daily Exc Fri)

15:45, 18:45, 21:45 (Thu) Plaza 19:00 Oru Nalla Naal Paarthu Soldren

(Tamil Film) 16:00, 19:00, 22:00 Ajial (Daily Exc Fri) 22:00 (Thu) Plaza 22:00 (Daily Exc Fri)

> Yemaali (Tamil Film) 18:30, 21:30 (Daily Exc Fri)

Ajial

UAE's Al Jaber Group close to \$1.6 bln debt restructuring

Abu Dhabi-based Al Jaber Group expects to seal a deal to restructure around 5.75 billion dirhams (\$1.6 billion) in debt this month, a source at the company and other sources familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

Although the conglomerate, which was founded by the Al-Jaber family in 1970, has struggled since a downturn in construction hit the UAE after the global financial crisis, its outlook for 2018 onwards is positive, the company

PHILIPPINES - All Shares

source told Reuters. Al Jaber's outlook has been boosted by expected wins of new construction

projects in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. "We have concluded all commercial terms of the new deal and are about to sign with all the banks to receive 100 percent agreement imminently," company source said, adding that 97.5

percent of creditors had agreed so far. Al Jaber's debt is mostly held by local and international banks, although some

01-02-2018

hedge funds and other non-bank financial institutions also feature among the creditor group, sources familiar with the matter said.

Since completing a \$4.5 billion debt restructuring in June 2014, Al Jaber, best known as a contractor but with interests in other sectors, has taken steps to sell non-core assets, including its 80 percent stake in construction joint venture ALEC to Investment Corporation of Dubai last year. (RTRS)

FAB mandates banks

First Abu Dhabi Bank, the largest bank in the United Arab Emirates, has appointed banks to lead a US dollar-denominated sukuk issue, sources familiar with the matter said.

The lender will meet investors on Feb 5 in London ahead of the planned Is-

lamic bond issue. Citi, First Abu Dhabi Bank, KFH Capital, NCB Capital and Standard Chartered will lead the deal, which has a five-year tenor, said the sources.

The sukuk is expected to be of benchmark size, which generally means upwards of \$500 million.

FAB did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The bank, formed by a merger of National Bank of Abu Dhabi and First Gulf Bank, is tapping the sukuk market to diversify its funding sources, one source close to the deal said. The planned debt sale would be part of FAB's \$2.5 billion sukuk programme. (RTRS)

Market Movements

Change Closing pts AUSTRALIA - All Ordinaries +52.30 6,198.80 JAPAN Nikkei +387.82 23.486.11

5,130.92

GERMANY FRANCE - CAC 40 **EUROPE** Euro Stoxx 50 S. KOREA KRX 100 Sensex HONG KONG - Hang Seng

Change Closing pts -185.58 13,003.90 5,454.55 -27.37 3,577.35 -31.94 -9.68 5,310.21 35.906.66 -58.36 32,642.09

Business

VIVA records KD 40.1 mln net profit for 2017

Board of Directors recommends distributing cash dividend of 30 fils per share

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the financial results for the full year ended on 31 December 2017; whereby VIVA's revenues reached KWD 278 million compared to KD 279 million recorded during 2016; whereas the net profit in 2017 reached KWD 40.1 million.

On quarterly basis VIVA recorded a remarkable performance with revenues rising by 7.2% to reach KD 73.4 million during Q4-2017 compared to KD 68.5 million recorded during the same quarter in 2016. On the other hand, VIVA achieved a 10% growth in net profit of KD 11.8 million during Q4-2017 compared to a net profit of KD 10.8 million reported during Q4-

These results reflect VIVA's focus on achieving superior customer experience, high quality of services, innovative promotions and packages offered to its customers to meet their needs and expectations, inspired by our customers' confidence which motivates us to provide the best services with the highest possible quality.

Commenting on announcing the annual financial results, Dr Mahmoud Ahmed Abdulrahman, VIVA's Chairman, has stated that "Despite the high competition witnessed in the Kuwaiti Telecom Market, VIVA was able to achieve a growth in the profitability and sustain the operational efficiency to ensure generating positive return to our shareholders. VIVA achieved these results due to an integrated management approach by a highly professional team that reinforces VIVA's substantial and positive role as a leading telecommunications company that always provides intelligent communications solutions to satisfy the needs of its customers and meet their

He added that "VIVA has demonstrated its ability to achieve a growth in the net profit amidst the current hard economic conditions and strong competition witnessed in the year 2017 which resulted from the decline in telecom tariffs thus pressurizing the profit margin of all tel-



Dr Mahmoud Ahmed Abdulrahman, VIVA Chairman

ecom companies in Kuwait. VIVA managed to achieve net profit of KWD 40.1 million (earnings per share of 80 fils) during the FY 2017 growing at 1% compared to net profit of KWD 39.8 million (earnings per share of 80 fils) during FY 2016.

On the other hand, VIVA has enhanced shareholders' equity base to stand at KWD 168 million at the end of 2017 with a growth rate of 26% compared to 2016. These results achieved by VIVA during 2017 reflect the efficient business strategy adopted by the company to achieve outstanding results in-spite of the increasing competitiveness. Also, VIVA managed to achieve positive earnings for its shareholders as a result of the commitment to elevate the quality of customer service and improving the operational efficiency". The Board of Directors has recommended distributing cash dividends of 30 fils among the shareholders representing 30 percent of the nominal share value for the year ended 2017 subject to the approval of the Ordinary



Eng Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Badran, VIVA CEO

General Assembly of the company.

On his part, Eng Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Badran VIVA's CEO said that "Results of 2017 came in line with VIVA goals and ongoing ambitions to achieve an increase in its operational businesses and strengthen its leadership in the telecom market. It is noteworthy to mention that VIVA won this year "Speedtest Award Winner 2017 - Kuwait's Fastest Mobile Network" by Ookla, and it is pioneer in the middle east in providing the latest products and services to its customers among telecom operators in the middle east region, and achieved successfully the establishment of the first Voice Over LTE (VoLTE) interconnection in the Middle East and North Africa region in partnership with local networks, and was the first telecom company in Kuwait that has successfully tested the fifth-generation "5G" in its lab, which fosters its leadership in providing the latest technology that will enable customers to exchange information and communicate at higher speeds. Al Badran added that "We have exerted great



efforts in 2017 through our integrated team work to establish a solid and strong base that insures the company's continuing successes in light of the strong competition in the Kuwaiti telecom market. VIVA achieved good levels of revenues and record a growth in the profitability in addition to improving the company's financial and operational efficiency. As a result, VIVA recorded revenues of KWD 278 million during FY 2017 and achieved net profit of KWD 40.1 million (earnings per share of 80 fils) in 2017, whereas the operating profit has reached KWD 42.6 million during the same year. On the other hand, VIVA customer base has reached 2.3 million at the end of December 2017.

On his part, Mohammed Bin AbdulMohsen Al-Assaf, VIVA's ĈFO, said that "During 2017, VIVA's financial results reflected its ability to compete and achieve growth in revenues during Q4-2017, and maintain its position as the second largest telecom operator in the Kuwaiti market in term of revenues in the telecom sector. The company managed to decrease its leverage ratio due to its conservative financial policy to reach 0.05x at the end of 2017 as compared to 0.36x recorded at end of 2016. On the other hand, VIVA managed to sustain healthy profitability ratios in light of intense competition where Return On Assets (ROA) has reached 14% while return on shareholders' equity (ROE) has reached 24% in 2017. "We will continue our hard work in implementing our strategy to maintain our competitive edge and achieve further growth and success in the Kuwaiti telecom market through offering innovative products and services in line with the latest technology to meet our customers' needs" he added.



Total Revenues

KD million

The Board of Directors of Kuwait Telecommunications Company (VIVA) is pleased to announce to its shareholders that the company has achieved a net profit of KD 40.1 million for the Financial Year ended 31 December 2017.

Operating Profit

Net Profit

EPS

Subscribers

Million subscriber

KD million

KD million

Kuwaiti fils







Bitcoin skids to two-month low

Bitcoin, the world's largest crypto-currency, skidded 11 percent on Thursday to its lowest since late November, as a Facebook ban on cryptocurrency adverts and a growing regulatory backlash against the nascent market frightened investors.

Thursday's drop to as low as \$9,022 on the Luxembourg-based Bitstamp exchange left bitcoin trading at less than half the peak price of almost \$20,000 it reached

in December. It slid more than 26 percent last month, in its worst monthly performance since Janu-

ary 2015.
Other cryptocurrencies, including Ripple, the third-largest by market value, and Bitcoin Cash, have also racked up double-digit declines in the last 24 hours, according to Coinmarketcap.com, which tracks the industry.

Ethereum was up slightly on the

Last year's explosive rise in the value of digital coins and the flood of new retail investors drawn to the market have rattled global regulators nervous about a sector used

largely for speculation.
Officials have also warned cryptocurrencies can be used by criminals to launder money. India, which has likened the market to a Ponzi scheme, on Thursday vowed to eliminate their use

Shell profit soars on oil price recovery

Royal Dutch Shell said Thursday that a major recovery in oil prices enabled it to nearly triple profits in

The Anglo-Dutch energy giant said in a statement that net or bottom-line earnings soared to just under \$13 billion last year from \$4.6 billion in 2016, with fourth-quarter profits leaping 147 percent to \$3.8 billion.

Shell said its performance was boosted particularly by rising oil

prices, which tend to ramp up revenues and profits for energy

majors.

World oil prices leapt by about
15 percent to finish the year at
around \$60 per barrel, aided by oil cartel OPEC's efforts to limit its collective production.

"Full-year earnings benefited mainly from higher realised oil, gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices, improved refining performance in the control of t mance and higher production from

new fields, which offset the impact of field declines and divestments,"

the company said.

Profit adjusted for exceptional items and the changing value of oil and gas inventories surged to \$12.1 billion in 2017, from \$3.5 billion last time around.

Annual production stood at 3.66 million barrels of oil equivalent per day, which was broadly similar to 2016 as growth was offset by divestments. (AFP)

Global factories start 2018 on solid footing

Japan factory reading at 4-yr high

LONDON/HONG KONG, Feb 1, (RTRS): Factories across the globe got off to a strong start this year, with manufacturing activity in most countries gaining momentum and hitting multiyear highs.

Business surveys from Europe and Asia showed solid activity and output, reinforcing expectations for another year of synchronised global expansion that has propelled many world stock markets to or close to record highs.

Last year, the eurozone economy was a surprise global star and any signs that zip, alongside rising price pressures, has carried into this year will be welcomed by the European Central Bank as it moves to unwind its super-loose monetary policy.

The 19-country bloc's booming manufacturing industry raced into 2018, churning out goods at one of the fastest monthly paces in over 20 years in Janu-

"The eurozone economy clearly has a tailwind behind it. There is nothing on the immediate horizon which would make you think the economy is about to run out of steam," said Peter Dixon, global financial economist at Commer-

IHS Markit's January final manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index for the eurozone was 59.6, matching an earlier preliminary reading but below December's 60.6 — which was the highest since the survey began in June 1997.

Indicating February would also be a busy month, new orders growth was at a near record pace as was employment. Firms also built up a solid backlog of work and were their most optimistic in at least 5-1/2 years.

Among the four biggest economies, PMIs were close to record highs in Germany and Italy and among the best for

BOSTON, Feb 1, (RTRS): After

Wells Fargo & Co decided to ramp

up risk in its flagship age-based re-

tirement funds last year, one of its

largest customers decided to call it

quits, unhappy with the new invest-

ment strategy and how the bank han-

April 2017 that its target-date funds

would become more aggressive, out-

lining a plan for better returns that

included buying junk bonds, stocks

in emerging markets and deriva-

tives. It was a stark difference from

the conservative investment strategy

TexaSaver, a supplemental retire-

ment program for nearly 240,000

state employees and elected officials,

was stunned by the changes, said

Georgina Bouton, assistant director

of benefit contracts at the Employees

Retirement System of Texas. The re-

tirement plan had fewer than 90 days

to accept the revamped product or

The retirement plan asked Wells

Fargo for more time to find another

manager, but the request was denied,

she said. TexaSaver ended a decade-

long relationship with Wells Fargo,

pulling more than \$600 million from

plan for more than 4,000 plumb-

ers and pipe-fitters also pulled its

money from the Wells Fargo funds,

citing the "unproven nature and sig-

nificance" of Wells Fargo's changes,

according to a notice sent to partici-

"It was a big surprise," Bouton

said in an interview. "What Wells

Fargo wanted to do contradicted

why we picked them in the first

place. I'm unhappy with the lack of

professionalism at Wells Fargo and

up risk to generate more income for

investors, and recognizes that some

customers are unhappy, said Fredrik

Axsater, head of strategic business

segments at Wells Fargo Asset Man-

"If the client is disappointed, then

The bank says it needed to dial

how this was conducted.

its target-date funds.

A Colorado-based

find another investment option.

for which the funds were known.

Wells Fargo notified investors in

dled the transition.

17 years and a decade in France and Spain respectively.

But the biggest outlier in Europe was Britain, where manufacturing lost more momentum than expected last month. Uncertainties over its path to leave the European Union next year curtailed business investment, following one of the steepest jumps in the cost of raw materials in decades.

"The UK economy looks set to grow at half the rate of the US in 2018 and a full percentage point slower than the eurozone," said James Knightley, chief international economist at ING. "It should be doing much better given the global upturn in demand and the competitive sterling exchange rate.

The UK factory PMI dropped to its lowest since June and the prospects for 2018 do not look bright.

Markets were little moved by the data. Focus will later turn to the United States, where a sister survey is expected to show solid manufacturing activity.

The strongest manufacturing readings in Asia came from tech exporters, which continue to ride a robust semiconductor cycle driven by upgrades in smartphones, industrial robots, cars, and more recently demand for computing machines used to mine cryptocurrencies

In Japan, the Markit/Nikkei PMI rose to a four-year high.

Taiwan's reading rose to its highest since April 2011, while South Korean factory activity bounced back into expansion territory as domestic and export orders picked up.

Even in China - where authorities are cracking down on air pollution and excessive financial risks - factory growth last month appeared generally resilient, though economists agree the crackdowns will start to weigh on activity eventually.

The private Caixin/Markit PMI was steady at 51.5, matching December's reading and better than economists at expected, though official data on Wednesday suggested a slight softening as export orders faltered.

Ending debt saga could lift investor confidence

Saudi steps up efforts to end \$22bn debt dispute



In this file photo, Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen speaks during a news conference following the Federal Open Market Committee meeting in Washington. When Yellen leaves the Federal Reserve this weekend after four years as chair, her legacy will include being the first woman to have led the world's most powerful central bank. She will be remembered, too, for her achievements in deftly steering the Fed's role in the US economy's rebound from a crushing financial crisis and recession. (AP)

Labor market tightening

US factory activity slows

WASHINGTON, Feb 1, (RTRS): US factory activity slowed in January amid a fall in new orders, but an unexpected drop in the number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits last week pointed to sustained labor market strength that should underpin domestic demand.

The economy's healthy fundamentals were also underscored by other data on Thursday showing a solid increase in construction spending in December. A drop in worker productivity in the fourth quarter, however, suggested it may be hard to maintain the strong pace of economic growth.

The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said its index of national factory activity fell to a reading of 59.1 last month from 59.3 in December. A reading above 50 in the ISM index indicates growth in manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the US economy.

The survey's production sub-index slipped 0.7 points to a reading of 64.5 in January and a measure of factory employment fell 3.9 points to 54.2. A gauge of new orders declined to 65.4 last month from 67.4 in December.

The moderation in orders is likely to be temporary against the backdrop of strong domestic and global demand. Manufacturers reported an increase in export orders.

Domestic demand increased at its fastest pace in more than three years in the fourth quarter. A weak dollar, which fell 7 percent against the currencies of the United States' main trading partners last year, is making US-made goods more competitive on the international market.

Prices of US Treasuries were mixed after the data while US stock indexes were largely flat. The dollar dipped against a basket of currencies.

In a separate report the Labor Department said initial claims for state unemployment benefits slipped 1,000 to a seasonally adjusted 230,000 for the week ended Jan 27. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast claims rising to 238,000 in the latest week.

Last week marked the 152nd straight week that claims remained below the 300,000 threshold, which is associated with a strong labor market. That is the longest such stretch since 1970, when the labor market was much smaller.

"The untapped reservoir of unemployed or underemployed skilled workers that existed in the aftermath of

Fed keeps rates unchanged has been rising at a solid rate." And the statement repeated that

US cenbank says inflation will 'move up'

WASHINGTON, Feb 1, (AFP): The Federal Reserve left the benchmark interest rate unchanged Wednesday after its first policy meeting of 2018, but said it expects inflation to move up this year - a possible signal of faster

In the last meeting of Fed Chair Janet Yellen's tenure, the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) said while price measures have remained below the central bank's two percent target, "inflation on a 12-month basis is expected to move up this year.'

That change of language will fuel expectations that the US central bank could raise the key lending rate more than the expected three times this

In December, the committee said inflation was "expected to remain somewhat below two percent in the

The change in tone will certainly reinforce the view among analysts that the first rate increase of 2018 will come in March.

The debate will be over how many more steps the central bank will take this year, especially if the tax cuts approved in December stimulate the world's largest economy.

The two-day meeting saw the normal annual rotation on the committee as four new regional Fed bank presi-

dents become voting members. Many analysts predicted the shift would give a more hawkish tilt to the Fed's deliberations, given that the new voters tend to be more con-

cerned about inflation threats. Economist Ian Shepherdson of Pantheon Macroeconomics said the stronger language on growth and inflation ... sets up the March hike.'

Other than the new phrasing on inflation, the FOMC largely repeated its analysis of the economic outlook, noting "the labor market has continued to strengthen and that economic activity

ferences a year, and the committee tends to make the interest rate moves at those meetings. Yellen leaves the Federal Reserve after having overseeing a smooth US recovery and the cautious unwinding

"further gradual adjustments" in rates

would allow continued moderate eco-

nomic growth and strong labor condi-

the key lending rate to 1.25-1.5 per-cent, the third increase last year in the

rate that affects all types of credit from

mortgages to car loans.

The Fed's quarterly economic pro-

jections also released last month indi-

cated the central bank is likely to raise

the federal funds rate three times in

But the minutes from the December

meeting revealed the conflicting views

about how fast the committee will

need to move to stay ahead of price

pressures at a time when strong job

creation has pushed unemployment

down to a 17-year low of 4.1 percent. Fed Governor Jerome Powell

tapped by President Donald Trump to replace Yellen, will be sworn in as

chair on Monday, the Fed said in a

statement. It will fall to him to decide

whether to tighten monetary policy at

with Powell at the helm, and the first

where he will give a press conference to explain the FOMC's thinking.

The Fed chair holds four press con-

The March meeting will be the first

2018 and once in 2019.

a quicker pace.

of a post-crisis stimulus program that critics had feared could unsettle markets and fuel inflation. "Janet Yellen will leave on a high

note," Diane Swonk, chief economist at Grant Thornton, wrote in a research note, citing her achievements in promoting diversity among policymakers and looking past unemployment rates in measuring labor markets.

the recession has largely disappeared," said Jim Baird, chief investment officer at Plante Moran Financial Advisors in Kalamazoo, Michigan. "Employers are finding it more difficult to find potential workers.' The labor market is near full em-

ployment, with the jobless rate at a 17year low of 4.1 percent. A tightening of labor market conditions has raised optimism among Federal Reserve officials that inflation will rise towards the US central bank's 2 percent target this year.

The Fed on Wednesday left its benchmark overnight interest rate unchanged and described the job market as having "continued to strengthen."

Smart machines likely to widen gap between rich and poor: survey

Al sparks hope — and fear, US poll shows

WASHINGTON, Feb 1, (AFP): Americans are torn over the promise of artificial intelligence, a new poll showed Wednesday, expressing broad optimism about the emerging technologies but also fearing their negative impacts - including job losses, a poll showed Wednesday.

The Gallup survey showed 79 percent of Americans say artificial intelligence has had a "mostly positive" or "very positive" impact on their lives thus far.

At the same time, 73 percent said they expect the increased use of AI will eliminate more jobs than it creates and

63 percent predicted that new technologies and smart machines would widen the gap between rich and poor.

Asked about autonomous vehicles, 42 percent of respondents said they would be "extremely uncomfortable" riding in a self-driving car and 62 percent would be concerned about sharing the road with self-driving trucks.

"In general it's fair to say there is optimism and also anxiety," said Brandon Busteed of Gallup, which conducted the survey with Northeastern Univer-

sity.

The survey sought to highlight the need for changes in education to deal

with the changing technology land-scape, said Northeastern president Joseph Aoun.

"The AI revolution is an opportunity for us to reimagine higher education — to transform both what and how we teach," Aoun said. "The answer to greater artificial intelligence is greater human intelligence."

The survey showed blue-collar workers to be more concerned than those in white-collar professions about the impact of automation on jobs. And just 34 percent of blue-collar respondents felt confident they could obtain the necessary training if they did lose their job.

DUBAI, Feb 1, (RTERS): Saudi Arabia has accelerated steps to resolve a \$22-billion debt dispute that is seen by investors as a litmus test of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's commitment to reforms, three sources familiar with the matter say.

Legal battles over the debts left by Saad Group and Ahmad Hamad al-Gosaibi & Bros Co (AHAB) have dragged on for almost a decade since the two family conglomerates collapsed in 2009. From Switzerland to the Cayman Islands, the two groups have squabbled over which of them is to blame for the meltdown.

There has been gradual progress in AHAB's case since 2009, with the company making a settlement offer which has the support of around two-thirds of investors, but there has been much less movement over Saad Group's debts.

The Saudi authorities signalled their impatience in October, when Saad Group owner Maan al-Sanea was detained for unpaid debt. This spurred efforts by the al-Sanea family to try to resolve the debt dispute, the sources

Saad Group took its first big step to engage with creditors last year by hiring a financial consultancy, Reemas Group, to offer a proposed settlement covering \$4 billion in debt.

In a further sign of momentum, a three-judge tribunal set up in 2016 to deal with financial claims against AHAB and Saad group has approved creditor claims of about 11.5 billion riyals (\$3 billion)against AHAB and appointed liquidators to deal with the unwinding of Saad Group's business empire, one of the sources said.

Such steps could be vital for the government to win over investors and secure foreign funds for privatisation projects under Vision 2030, the plan unveiled by Prince Mohammed in April 2016 to transform Saudi Arabia and reduce its reliance on oil.

"This is a \$20 billion-plus problem for Saudi Arabia and unless it's handled well it will create a long-term legacy issue for some foreign investors," said one of the people familiar with the matter.

Between them, AHAB and Saad Group owe money to more than 100 international banks including HSBC, BNP Paribas and Citigroup. Saad Group is also in debt to contractors including Germany's Siemens AG and thousands of staff.

AHAB has said al-Sanea, who married into the al-Gosaibi family more than 30 years ago, defrauded it of billions of dollars after he was put in charge of its financial businesses. He

strongly denies wrongdoing. Saudi Arabia has no insolvency rules though a bankruptcy law is awaiting King Salman's signature.

AHAB declined to comment for this article, citing the tribunal that is handling its case.

Saudi Arabia's Royal Court referred a request for comment to the government's Center for International Communication, which did not respond. The Ministry of Justice also did not respond to a request for comment.

Al-Sanea's detention was not directly related to the arrests of dozens of senior officials and businessmen in a crackdown on corruption in early November, but the dispute touches on similar investor concerns about graft.

He remains in detention while the last of the people held since early November in Riyadh's Ritz-Carlton Hotel, which had been used as an interrogation centre, have been released or moved elsewhere.

Al-Sanea has been sentenced to five years in jail in absentia in Bahrain for convictions including breaching central bank rules. The sentence has been stayed pending an appeal. Al-Sanea has previously denied any wrongdoing and said the charges were politically motivated. In a sign that some creditors are now more optimistic there will be a positive outcome to the debt dispute, Saad Group's debt has been trading up at 3 to 5 cents on the dollar in recent weeks, compared to 1 to 3 cents

But some investors remain sceptical. A hedge fund trader who had been considering buying Saudi debt described the attempts by Saad's advisers to resolve the issue with creditors as a "dog and pony show" and said "very little" work had been done to reach a settlement since November.

previously, bankers say.

Two other sources said Reemas was hoping to push forward in the coming weeks with a proposal to creditors receptive to its plans. Reemas Group did not respond to a request for comment.

The star asset in the al-Sanea family's business empire was the Saad Specialist Hospital in the coastal city of Khobar, one of the country's top cancer treatment facilities.

It in effect ceased operating in November, saddled with debts and unable to pay wages or contractors, sources familiar with the situation said.

tion in the marketplace as "really

we are disappointed," said Axsater. "In our mind, the client is always Axsater said Wells Fargo is committed to the more aggressive strategy. He described the overall recep-

Wells Fargo's troubles with some retirement plans were happening last year while the third-largest US bank was trying to right itself from a scan-

after raising risk in fund dal in its retail operation.

Unhappy with new strategy

Wells Fargo loses client

Employees at bank branches had created up to 3.5 million phony accounts in customers' names without their permission, abuses detailed in a \$190-million regulatory settlement in September 2016. Wells has since disclosed other potential issues with mortgages, auto loans and "add-on"

products tacked onto accounts. Chief Executive Officer Tim Sloan has pledged to restore trust by putting customers first. At the same time, he is trying to boost returns for shareholders by improving profits in businesses including asset management, where target date funds have

been a particular sore spot. In 2017 alone, Wells Fargo's target-date funds experienced \$4.7 billion in net withdrawals, according to Morningstar data. Overall assets there have dropped by two-thirds over the past three years, to \$5.5 billion from nearly \$17 billion, even as tens of billions of dollars have been flowing into target-date funds man-

aged by other firms. Reuters discovered complaints by TexaSaver and the Colorado Pipe Industry in public documents, but could not learn how many investors in total decided to leave its targetdate funds after the investment strategy changed.

Until last year, Wells Fargo relied on a firm called Global Index Advisors (GIA) to manage asset allocation in target-date funds. GIA tracked performance of Dow Jones indexes, a passive strategy that was less risky than many peers'.

Previously, investors in those funds had 28 percent exposure to the stock market at retirement, compared with at least 50 percent exposure at the largest target-date providers - Vanguard Group, Fidelty Investments and T. Rowe Price, US regulatory filings show.

That conservative tilt was cause for celebration during the financial crisis. Wells Fargo's 2010 targetdate fund, for example, suffered a 10.75 percent loss in 2008, compared to an average decline of 22.5 percent in a category whose investors were on the eve of retirement. During the stock market rally of

the past nine years, that dynamic has changed, with Wells Fargo's target date funds underperforming most competitors, according to Morningstar Inc data. The \$888-million Wells Fargo Target 2020 Fund, for example, has generated average annual total return of 4.21 percent over the past 10 years, lagging 86 percent

Al-Shall Report

Boursa Kuwait shines in January, liquidity soars

Oil revenues pegged at KD 13.3b in FY 2018/19

Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Draft **Budget**

The draft budget for fiscal year \blacksquare 2018/2019 is the fourth draft general budget since the oil market's collapse in 2014 fall. Reading through its figures, we failed for the fourth time not only to find any link between these numbers but also any genuine effort for saving and waste reduction, or directing its expenditures to be a useful tool to achieve declared development objectives. Unofficial published public expenditures figures until one day before the official announcement scored KD 20.150 billion, reduced by official announcement to KD 20 billion so as not to break the KD 20 billion ceiling, says Al-Shall Economic Report prepared by Al-Shall Consulting Co headed by Jassem Al-Saadoun.

Revenue figures state that those revenues are estimated to score KD 15 billion with continued dominance of the unsustainable and unstable oil revenues estimated at KD 13.3 billion by contributing 88.7% of the total revenues. The estimation ground of the increase of the hypothetical price for a barrel of oil from US\$ 45 in the current fiscal year to US\$ 50 per barrel due to the current rise in oil prices is meaningless. Deficit figures are linked to actual prices, controlling public expenditures in addition to production volume and the US\$ exchange rate. Non-oil revenues estimates have increased by about 6.25% to be US\$ 1.7 billion instead of the KD 1.6 billion for the current fiscal year. The increase cannot be considered as reform, if achieved. In fact it is much less than some of its actual historical rates. Final account figures indicate that nonoil revenues scored KD 2.039 billion in the FY 2012/2013, KD 2.520 billion in the FY 2013/2014, and about KD 2.424 billion in FY 2014/2015, i.e. it became lower.

As for public expenditures, they are estimated at KD 20 billion, by a slight increase by about 0.5% from the current fiscal year estimate at KD19.9 billion, with KD 14.6 billion for wages, salaries and subsidies, or about 73% of the total. About 9% of the total is added to the current supplementary expenses thus making 82% of those expenses as current and inflexible. In other words, the general budget in Kuwait is no more than liquefying crude oil and converting it into a fund for dispensing salaries and the like. This is well if its sustainability is possible; however, its unsustainability costs heavily to be paid by the overwhelming majority of citizens. Even the remaining 18% of public expenditure allocated for projects, is spending without development identity and without linking it with its simplest and most important objectives, i.e. creating sustainable jobs for citizens. Indeed, its corruption, poor completion quality and high cost are an extra future burden on the already exhausted public finance. Besides, there is no sense to transfer 10% of revenues to the future generations fund if deficit is higher than it. Therefore, hypothetical deficit is KD 5 billion.

Four precious years have passed and the Government is still unable to understand that reform begins with it and ends with citizens and expatriates and not vice versa. Reading the development plans and their achievements or the financial reform role to achieve sustainability of public finance confirm that no real reform has been achieved. And the current draft budget is nothing but a confirma-

10%



Photo by Bassam Abu Shanab File photo shows traders at Boursa Kuwait floor. The market trod water on Thursday.

tion either for the non-desire or inability to reform, and the dangers of that inability to reform are much further beyond the citizen's imagination.

Oil and Public Finance - January 2018

By the end of January 2018, the 10th month of the current fiscal year 2017/2018 ended and the average Kuwaiti oil price for the past part of the current year scored US\$ 53 per barrel and for January it scored US\$ 65.7 per barrel, up by US\$ 4.8 per barrel, 7.9%, from December's average price of US\$ 60.9 per barrel. It is also higher by US\$ 20.7 per barrel, 46%, than the new budget hypothetical price of US\$ 45 per barrel. It is also higher by US\$ 12.7 per barrel than the average price for the past part of the year. The last fiscal year 2016/2017 which ended on March 31, 2017 scored an average price for Kuwaiti oil by US\$ 44.7 per barrel. The average price of oil for the past part of the current fiscal year is higher by 18.6% than the average price for the past fiscal year but it is lower by US\$ -18 per barrel than the parity price for the current budget at US\$ 71 per barrel, according to the Ministry of Finance estimates after deducting the 10% for the

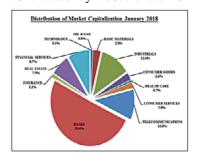
Future Generations Fund. According to the monthly follow up report of the State's Financial Administration issued by the Ministry of Finance for December 2017/2018, actual oil revenues scored about KD 10.152 billion until the end of last December. Kuwait is supposed to have achieved KD 1.4 billion in oil revenues during January. Therefore, Kuwait's total oil revenues would score an amount of KD 14 billion for the entire fiscal year, which is more by KD 2.3 billion than the budget estimate in the amount of KD 11.7 billion. An additional amount of KD 998.3 million has been collected in non-oil revenues in the same duration. It would score KD 1.3 billion for the entire fiscal year. Therefore, projected budget revenues would score KD 15.3 billion for the current fiscal year. Comparing this figure with KD 19.9 billion for expenditures, 2017/2018 budget would face a hypothetical deficit by KD 4.6 billion. Assuming 6.3% saving in total public expenditures as in last year, actual expenditures would drop to KD 18.6 billion, which is a mere estimate. If this happens, public budget then would score a KD 3-3.5 billion deficit. It could be less if oil prices hold in the remaining part of the year.

Performance of Boursa Kuwait - January 2018

January performance was more active compared with December 2017, where all indexes of value, volume, number of transactions, and value of the general index (AlShall) rose. Trading value liquidity - scored KD 322.9 million, with a 67.7% rise, versus KD 192.5 million trading value in December 2017. Average daily trading for January (22 working days) scored KD 14.7 million compared with KD 9.6 million as December's average. Liquidity trends still indicate that half of listed companies obtained only 1.9% of that liquidity, including 50 companies which captured only 0.4% of that liquidity and 5 companies remained without any trading. As for liquid companies, 15 companies whose market value equals 2.1% only of listed companies' value, captured 22.1% of the Boursa liquidity. This means liquidity deprives half of the listed companies from it. On the contrary, liquidity goes to valueless companies despite performance balance of January between the weighted and price indexes of the Boursa. Distribution of liquidity among the 4 categories of companies was as follows:

■ The Highest 10% in Liquidity: 16 listed companies captured about 72.5% of boursa liquidity in January and contributed about 55.7% of the market capitalization for all listed companies, including 13 large companies, - with market capitalization higher than KD 100 million- that contributed 55.3% of the boursa capitalization. Their share is 89.4% of that category liquidity, which is logical, and 3 small companies that captured 10.6% of the liquidity of that category. Their market capitalization did not exceed 0.4% of all market companies' capitalization. This involves a harmful speculative indicator which may be remedied after the market's reforms.

■ The Highest 10% in Market Capitalization: That category contributed by about 52.3% of



Al-Shall Index

10/08/2017

394.0 198.4 233.4 331.9 307.9 1433.4 441.1 129.9 263.4

50.0 **143.1**

the boursa liquidity and contributed by 68.9% of its market capitalization. However, there was obvious liquidity deviation for 9 companies which captured about 95.4% of the liquidity of that category leaving approximately 4.6% of liquidity for 7 other large companies.

The Lowest 10% in Market Capitalization: That category captured 1.3% from the boursa liquidity although its contribution to its market capitalization does not exceed 0.3%. 7 companies within this category captured 89.4% of the liquidity of this category, while 9 other small companies got only 10.6% of that category liquidity. That liquidity deviation within this category, means that the discrimination in speculation is quite big and includes small companies, some of it may be justifiable.

■ Liquidity of Boursa Sectors: There are 5 active sectors in the boursa that contribute by about 89.6% to its market capitalization. They acquired 92.8% of January's liquidity suggesting consistence between liquidity and weight of those sectors in the boursa capitalization. There was a deviation in those sectors' liquidity orientations. The banking sector got 42.7% of boursa liquidity versus 50.6% contribution to its market capitalization. This means its share of liquidity is less than its contribution to the market capitalization. The financial services sector got 16.4% of boursa liquidity, equivalent to about 1.9 times its contribution to its market capitalization. The real estate sector got 10.1% of boursa liquidity which equals 1.4 times its contribution to its market capitalization and both sectors are considered speculative sectors. The remaining 7 sectors, liquid and non-liquid, all acquired liquidity ratios close to their contribution to the boursa capitalization. The following graph illustrates market capitalization distribution by sectors as of the end of January 2018:

Comparative Performance of Selected Stock Markets – January 2018

The performance of markets started positively with the New Year. 12 markets out of the 14 sample markets achieved gains with some substantial gains for one month — while 2 markets achieved losses. Truly, the results of just one month are not adequate to judge a general trend, but the continuation of the high gainers, like the Indian and the American markets, and the highest loser the Qatari market in 2017, in achieving gains in

January seems encouraging. The biggest gainer in January belonged to Qatari market whose index achieved 8% although the Qatari market ended the year as the biggest loser. After its -18.3% losses in 2017, reducing its losses in 13 months (December 2016 - January 2018) by -11.8% was a major compensation. The Saudi market came as a second winner whose index added 5.9% gains to start the compensation process after a weak performance in 2017 in which the Saudi market achieved minor gains by 0.2%. The Indian and the American markets achieved quite similar gains by 5.6% and 5.5% respectively during January, securing their leading position regarding their performance since the end of 2016. The Indian market achieved 35.1% gains and the American market achieved gains by 32% during the previous 13 months.

The biggest loser in January was the British market whose index lost -2.0% after gaining 7.6% in 2017, resulting in 5.5% gains in the last 13 months. The second biggest loser in January 2018 was Muscat market which its index lost by -1.9%, the Muscat market was also the second biggest loser in 2017. January concludes in a contradictory manner when two markets from the Gulf region top the gainers list and also another market from the same region finishes rock bottom.

In general, and after a weak performance for the GCC markets in 2017 and with 4 of its markets occupying the whole negative zone, January performance shows that there is a mixed performance among the regional, emerging and mature markets. January 2018 performance was opposed to the performance of 2017 with 6 GCC markets seated in the positive zone. Among the best performers in the sample markets, the Qatari market took the lead while the Saudi market came second.

The positive performance may continue in February. All expectations suggest improvement in the global economy. There is an intention among most main global central banks not rush in increasing the interest rates. Some of them like the Japanese Central Bank which promised to continue the quantitative facilitation policy. On the Gulf region, there is a prevailing conviction that its internal crisis has peaked and would not develop any worse, at least in the short term. Moreover, their economies are receiving support from the current and high oil prices. Therefore, for the short term only, these factors will aid the continued support for the performance of all markets. By the end of February, we may observe a reduction in the number of markets in the negative zone and all of them could transfer into win-

The Weekly Performance of **Boursa Kuwait**

The performance of Boursa Kuwait for last week was mixed compared to the previous one, where the traded value index increased while the traded volume index, the number of transactions index, and the general index, showed a decrease, AlShall Index (value weighted) closed at 396.7 points at the closing of last Thursday, showing a decrease of about 9.8 points or about 2.4% compared with its level last week and it increased by 9.7 points or about 2.5% compared with the end of 2017.

The following tables summarize last week's performance of Boursa Kuwait

Description	week up	Week U4	וווע
	01/02/2018	25/01/2018	%
Working days	5	5	
AlShall index (34 Companies	396.7	406.5	-2.4%
Boursa Kuwait index (price)	6,685.23	6,651.9	0.5%
Value Trade (KD)	76,278,282	68,301,210	
Daily average (KD)	15,255,656	13,660,242	11.7%
Volume Trade (Shares)	560,097,407	593,962,136	
Daily average (Shares)	112,019,481	118,792,427	-5.7%
Transactions	21,509	21,789	
Daily average (Transactions)	4,302	4,358	-1.3%
	Working days AlShall index (34 Companies Boursa Kuwait index (price) Value Trade (KD) Volume Trade (Shares) Daily average (Shares) Transactions	Value Trade (KD) Value V	Working days 01/02/2018 25/01/2018 AlShall index (34 Companies) 396.7 406.5 Boursa Kuwait index (price) 6,685.23 6651.9 Value Trade (KD) 76,278,282 68,301,210 Daily average (KD) 15,255,656 13,660,242 Volume Trade (Shares) 560,097,407 593,902,136 Daily average (Shares) 112,019,481 118,792,427 Transactions 21,509 21,789

Most Active Sectors & Companies

most Autivo oout	010 00	iipuiiioo
escription	Value Traded	% of Total
ompanies	KD	Market
wait Finance House	16,247,988	21.3%
ational Bank Of Kuwait	9,893,639	13.0%
maar Holding Co	6,935,390	9.1%
obile Teleco Co. K.S.C (ZAIN)	4,219,993	5.5%
imtiaz Investment Co. K.S.C.C.	3,855,551	5.1%
otal	41,152,562	54.0%
escription	Value Traded	% of Total
ectors	KD	Market
anks Sector	39,467,452	51.7%
nancial Services Sector	12,045,706	15.8%
eal Estate Sector	7,274,559	9.5%
dustrials Sector	7,261,900	9.5%
elecommunications Sector	4,819,008	6.3%
Shall Index	Week 05	Week 04
	01/02/2018	25/01/2018
creased Value (# of Companies)	11	13
ecreased Value (# of Companies)	18	16
nchanged Value (# of Companies)	5	5

2.1 **2.8**

The National Bank Of Kuwait Commercial Bank Of Kuwait Al-Ahli Bank Of Kuwait Kuwait International Bank Ahli United Bank Kuwait Finance House 10 International Financial Advisors 11 National Investments 12 Kuwait Investment Projects 13 Coast Investment & Develor 14 Kuwait Insurance Company Gulf Insurance Company

16 Al-Ahleia Insurance Company

Insurance Sector

18 Kuwait Real Estate Company

17 Warba Insurance Company

03/08/2017

456.7 204.8 375.3 208.2 245.9 333.8 306.9 1495.3 453.9 128.5 256.9 129.6 681.9 1.1 2.5 61.5 399.2 161.5 54.3 143.3

2016 429.7 193.4

375.3 189.9 237.6 331.9 1401.1 430.2 122.7 234.2 123.3 746.5 60.6 469.9 174.6

2.6 4.2 5.0 4.5 (1.8) 0.0 2.7 2.3 2.5 5.9 12.5 52.8 **158.1**

From Jan 25, 2018 to Feb 01, 2018 20 National Real Estate Company Salhiah Real Estate Company 3.2 1413.2 1368.8 Real Estate Sector 22 The National Industries 145.6 (1.2) 0.0 708.5 708.5 23 Refrigeration Industries Co 24 Gulf Cable & Electrical Industries

282.1 1429.4 (1.1) 8.7 0.0 134.0 708.5 174.7 204.9 (2.1) (**0.6**) 203.6 198.1 Industrial Sector (13.1) 7.9 17.2 715.6 816.0 25 Kuwait National Cinemas (0.9) (2.3) (5.7) 1.4 709.3 26 The Public Warehousing Co 3357 0 3434.6 3112.5 616.0 27 Mobile Telecommunications Co (ZAIN) 722.2 765.9 Safat Energy Co 225.7 (3.5) (0.5) 5.1 0.0 9.4 (1.3) 6.6 (5.1) (4.2) Services Sector 1084.6 1123.6 991.1 190.8 29 Livestock Transport & Trading Co 188.3 71.1 1039.6 70.1 1095.7 30 Danah Aalsafat Foodstuff Company 74.7 31 Kuwait Food Co Food Sector 32 Sharjah Cement Co 33 Gulf Cement Co 375.0 322.6 5.2 (1.1) 329 1 312.9 (12.2) 7.5 350.8 346.8 Non Kuwaiti Companies 226.9 230.2

Total Companies

8% 5.5% 4.6% 4.4% 4%

Performance of Selected Stock Markets during the month of January 2018

2.6% 2.1% 2% -2% DAY (Germany) DI (USA)
SE COMPOSITE (China)
SE COMPOSITE (China)
Price Index)
CAC AD (France)
DAX(II
Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange
Rouse Ruwait (Weighted Index)

BUSINESS

ANA soars to record profit Japanese giant All Nippon Airlines on Thursday posted

record profits for the nine months to December thanks to solid demand, but stuck to its full-year forecast Parent company ANA Holdings said net profits for the April-December period soared 76.7 percent from a year

earlier to 152.96 billion yen (\$1.4 billion).

Operating profit rose 27.4 percent to 165.97 billion yen, as sales grew 11.9 percent to a record 1.49 trillion yen. "Amid gradual economic recovery, sales increased chiefly in our passenger flight business," ANA, the coun-

try's top airline by passenger numbers, said in a state-

Name: Kuwait Sharia											
Hame: Nawait Onana		Bloomberg	Today's	Today's closing	Prev closing	%	1-week	3-month	YTD	12-month	24-month
Compatible Indices	Index name	ticker	value as of	value	value	change	change	change	change	change	change
Companible mulces	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Composite	AMIC	February 1, 2018	171.95	171.93	0.01%	-1.30%	-1.67%	2.70%	-9.97%	17.71%
B 11	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Kuwait Only	AMIC	February 1, 2018	166.43	166.13	0.18%	-1.44%	-1.65%	2.79%	-8.22%	16.80%
Providers: Al Madar Finance &	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Active	AMIC	February 1, 2018	79.05	78.46	0.75%	-5.31%	-4.81%	6.31%	-30.02%	24.65%
	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Banking Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	283.83	283.16	0.24%	-2.45%	-0.37%	2.05%	-4.17%	10.97%
Investment Co.	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Investment Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	49.17	49.44	-0.53%	-1.47%	-6.80%	2.82%	-27.95%	25.23%
investment oo.	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Insurance Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	20.45	20.45	0.00%	7.36%	-3.49%	-5.78%	-7.11%	26.83%
B 1.11 1.1 1.01 1.	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Real Estate Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	49.90	50.29	-0.78%	0.84%	0.88%	5.21%	-11.84%	5.70%
Description: Index of Sharia	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Industrial Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	148.59	149.30	-0.47%	-0.83%	2.57%	2.01%	1.41%	30.73%
	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Services Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	223.55	223.43	0.05%	-1.39%	-0.09%	2.09%	-1.18%	36.14%
compatible companies traded on	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Food Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	165.01	165.01	0.00%	1.15%	-36.18%	-3.71%	-56.83%	-40.78%
companible companies traded on	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Islamic Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	138.66	138.32	0.25%	-1.59%	0.28%	3.11%	-7.54%	19.69%
	Kuwait Sharia Compatible Index - Non Kuwaiti Sector	AMIC	February 1, 2018	409.55	404.44	1.26%	1.34%	3.96%	6.98%	-30.56%	66.00%
the KSE	Kuwait Stock Exchange Index - Price	KWSEIDX	February 1, 2018	6,685.23	6,687.81	-0.04%	0.50%	2.09%	4.33%	-2.38%	30.90%
	S&P 500	SPX	January 31, 2018	2,823.81	2,822.43	0.05%	-0.48%	9.46%	5.07%	23.91%	45.54%
Website: www.almadar-fi.com	DJ Islamic Index.	DJIM	January 31, 2018	3,832.34	3,835.90	-0.09%	-0.80%	8.26%	5.37%	28.12%	44.48%

Boursa Kuwait monthly report



Bayan Investment Co

Price Index gains 4.37% in Jan as volume swells

Boursa Kuwait ended January in the green zone. The Price Index closed at 6,687.81 points, up by 4.37 percent compared to the closings of the month before, the Weighted Index increased by 2.63 percent after closing at 411.98 points, whereas the KSX-15 Index closed at 940.81 points increasing by 2.84 percent. Furthermore, last month's average turnover increased by 52.50 percent, compared to the preceding month, reaching KD 14.68 million, whereas trading volume average was 118.79 million shares, recording an increase of 91.79 percent.

The trading activity during the month of January of the new year showed that the market was able to realize grouped gains for its three indices for the second consecutive month, as a result to the increased purchasing operations that targeted many listed stocks in the market and headed by the leading and operational stocks, especially the ones expected to disclose good profits and dividends for the year

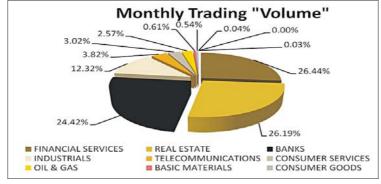
In addition, the Boursa recorded market gains of more than KD 700 million, due to the good performance it witnessed during the month of January where its market capitalization reached around KD 27.64 billion, against KD 26.94 billion on December, up by 2.61 percent. (Note: the market cap for the listed companies in the Primary Market is calculated based on the average

	Price index	Weighted index	15 KSX
Jan.	6,687.81	411.98	940.81
Dec.	6,408.01	401.42	914.87
CH. %	4.37%	2.63%	2.84%

number of outstanding shares as per the latest available official financial statements).

Also, the Market was affected by the profit collection operations that were present during some daily sessions of the month, where such operations contributed into the decline of the Price Index in 7 sessions and the decrease of the weighted indices in 11 session, out of 22 session witnessed during the last month, which lightened the three indices' gains on the monthly level.

On another hand, a general state of watch and cautious have shed over the



market during the last month, as traders were waiting for the listed companies to disclose its financial results for the vear ended on Dec 31, 2017, where such state is expected to remain present until all listed companies disclose its annual results.

Sectors' Indices

Eight of Boursa Kuwait sectors ended Last month in the green zone, while the other four recorded decreases. last month's highest gainer was Real Estate sector, achieving 13.93 percent growth rate as its index closed

at 1,063.08 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Banks sector's index closed at 955.10 points recording 4.65 percent increase, followed by the Financial Services sector's index closed at 644.69 points recording 4.17 percent increase.

On the other hand, the Insurance sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 6.54 percent to end the month's activity at 1,033.71 points. The Technology sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 2.66 percent, closing at 465.82

16.44% **■** BANKS FINANCIAL SERVICES ■ INDUSTRIALS REAL ESTATE

Monthly Trading "Value"

points, followed by the Consumer Services sector, as its index closed at 881.97 points at a loss of 2.13 percent. Sectors' Activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume during the last month of 691 million shares changing hands, representing 26.44 percent of the total market trading volume. The Real Estate sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 26.19 percent of last month's total trading volume, with a

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of KD 137.94 million or 42.72 percent of last month's total market trading value. The Financial Services sector took the second place as the sector's last month turnover of KD 53.09 million representing 16.44 percent of the total market trading value.

42.72%

For further details, please visit our

Australian govt tightens foreign investment rules on power, farms

CANBERRA, Australia, Feb 1, (AP): The Australian government announced tighter controls on foreign investment in electricity grids and farmland on Thursday, two years after Chinese buyers were blocked from high-profile corporate takeovers in both sectors.

New restrictions will apply to foreign companies bidding for Australian electricity transmission infrastructure and some generators. Diversity of ownership of such critical national assets safeguarded national security, Treasurer Scott Morrison and Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton said in a joint statement.

"The government is committed to an open foreign investment regime that strikes the right balance in managing national security risks, while promoting job opportunities and enabling economic growth," the statement

"With electricity distribution assets, the stakes are higher, and Australians expect additional foreign investment protections,"

it added.

Companies selling Australian farms and ranches will have to advertise to Australians first.

"We welcome foreign investment in Australian agricultural land where it is not contrary to the national interest," Morrison said in a separate statement.

Morrison said concerns about Australians' ability to compete for land was a factor in his 2016 decision to rule out foreign ownership of Australia's largest cattle empire covering more than 101,000 square kms (39,000 square miles), vetoing a Chinese-

Morrison approved the sale of the country's largest private landholding, S. Kidman & Co Ltd, to Australia's richest woman Gina Rinehart, with a 33 percent stake bought by her Chinese partner Shanghai CRED Real Estate Stock Co Ltd.

A month earlier, Morrison blocked Chinese bidders from leasing a Sydney electricity grid, saying the deal would not have been in the nation's best interest.

India budget offers free cooking gas and health plan for the poor

Govt looking to woo voters ahead of elections next year

NEW DELHI, Feb 1, (AP): **India's finance minister on** Thursday announced a federal budget with a string of populist giveaways, from affordable housing to a health plan for millions of the poor, in an attempt to woo voters ahead of national elections next year.

Speaking in Parliament, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley also announced a liberalization of agricultural exports, which will increase from \$30 billion a year to \$100 billion, to help push up crop prices for farmers. Exports of many agricultural products have long been restricted by regulations.

The government will also help build more than 5 million affordable houses for the poor in the next financial year,

which goes from April 1 to March 31. India's stock market took a hit after Jaitley announced a 10 percent tax on some long-term capital gains, saying stock market returns were "quite attractive and it was time to bring them under

He announced no changes for personal income tax rates.

the ambit of capital gains tax.

"This is an election budget," said M.S. Unnikirishnan of the Confederation of Indian Industry, a powerful trade group. "It's good at the macro level with the government keeping the fiscal deficit at 3.5 percent of the gross domestic prod-

uct." India's economy totals \$2.5 trillion. To help millions of farmers, Jaitley raised prices for rice and other crops to at least 50 percent more than the cost of production. Prices are currently set at a 20 percent markup. He also increased the target for farm loans by 10 percent to more than 10 billion rupees (\$150 mil-

Thousands of farmers take their own

CapCorp Local Fund



Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley arrives at Parliament House to present the Union Budget in New Delhi on Feb 1. (AFP)

lives each year in India as failed harvests force them to borrow money at high interest rates to buy seeds, fertilizer and even food for themselves and their cattle. They often mortgage their lands.

This is the last budget of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which will seek a second five-year tenure in May 2019 national elections. The new government will determine the full-year budget for 2019-20.

The minister announced the creation of a health care program for 100 million poor families, providing free hospitalization up to 500,000 rupees, or \$7,500, per person. But Jaitley did not explain how the program would be funded or organized in a country with a desperately underfunded and chaotic public health system. He also said 80 million women would be given free connections for liquefied cooking gas, which cost about \$45 apiece, and 40 million poor families would get free electricity connections, which cost \$12-\$20.

investment funds

Sent 28 2017 KD

1.000 0.991

Aug 30, 2017

	Funds 	Fund Manager	Valuation	Valued date	Currency	Net Asset Value (NAV)	Prev NAV	Prev NAV Dat
National Bank	of Kuwait							
Money Market Funds	Watani KD Money Market Fund II Watani USD Money Market Fund	NBK Capital NBK Global Asset Management Co. Ltd.	Weekly Weekly	Jan 16, 2018 Jan 16, 2018		1.036 10.286	1.035 10.128	Jan 7, 2018 Jan 7, 2018
	Watani KD Money Market Fund (Acc to Islamic Shariah principles) II Watani USD Money Market Fund (Acc	NBK Global Asset Management Co. Ltd.	Weekly	Jan 16, 2018	KD	1.035	1.034	Jan 7, 2018
	to Islamic Shariah principles) II	NBK Global Asset Management Co. Ltd.	Weekly	Jan 16, 2018	USD	10.131	10.283	Jan 7, 2018
	NBK Kuwait Equity Fund	Watani Investment Co.	Weekly	Jan 11, 2018		0.572	0.661	Jan 4, 2018
	Gulf Equity Investment Fund Regional Bond and Sukuk Investment Fund	Watani Investment Co. NBK Capital	Weekly Weekly	Jan 11, 2018 Dec 28, 2017			11.330 10.018	Jan 4, 2018 Dec 28, 201
 Gulf Bank								
	Al Basha'er GCC Equity Fund	Kwt. Fin. & Inv. Co. & Gulf Fin. House	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017		7.026	6.290	Nov 30, 20
	Coast Fund	Coast Investment & Dev. Co.	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017		0.646	0.667	Nov 30, 201
	Markaz Real Estate Fund ———————————————————————————————————		Bi-annual	Dec 31, 2017	' KD	1.375 	1.391	Nov 30, 201
Al Ahli Bank	Al Ahli Gulf Fund	Al Ahli Bank	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017	' KD	0.851	0.874	Nov 30, 201
	Al Ahli Kuwaiti Fund	Al Ahli Bank	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017		0.827	0.856	Nov 30, 201
Burgan Bank	Durana Farriba Frank	Duran Paul	Monthly	lon 0, 0010	KD	1.071	1 117	Nov. 00, 00-
	Burgan Equity Fund	Burgan Bank	Monthly	Jan 2, 2018	KD	1.071 	1.117	Nov 26, 201
Boubyan Bank	Boubyan KD Money Market Fund	Boubyan Bank	Weekly	Jan 30, 2018	KD	1.072	1.071	Jan 16, 201
	Boubyan KD Money Market Fund II	Boubyan Bank	Weekly	Jan 30, 2018		1.012	1.018	Jan 16, 201
 Boubyan Capita	ıl Investment Co.							
	Boubyan USD Liquidity Fund Boubyan Multi-Asset Holding Fund	Boubyan Capital Investment Co Boubyan Bank		Jan 30, 2018 Jan 30, 2018			10.286 10.980	Jan 16, 201 Sept 30, 20
 Kuwait Investm	ent Co.							
Local Fund	Al Raed Fund	Kuwait Investment Co	Weekly	Jan 18, 2018		1.069	0.998	Dec 7, 2017
	Kuwait Investment Fund Al Hilal Fund	Kuwait Investment Co Kuwait Investment Co	Weekly Monthly	Dec 28, 2017 Jan 22, 2018		0.739 0.704	0.710 0.704	Nov 29, 201 Dec 4, 2017
	Al Atheer Fund	Kuwait Investment Co	Weekly	Dec 30, 2017		1.009	1.009	Nov 30, 201
International	Global Bond Fund	Kuwait Investment Co	Weekly	Jan 17, 2018			26.200	Dec 27, 20
	Diversified Fund	Kuwait Investment Co	Weekly	Jan 17, 2018			20.710	Dec 27, 20
	European Fund Pacific Equity Fund	Kuwait Investment Co Kuwait Investment Co	Weekly Weekly	Dec 29, 2017 Jan 17, 2017			21.690 34.310	Nov 30, 20 Dec 27, 20
	North American Equity Fund	Kuwait Investment Co	Tw. Monthly	Dec 29, 2017			19.250	Nov 30, 201
National Invest								
	Al-Wataniya Fund	NIC NIC	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017		0.615	0.606	Nov 30, 20
	Al-Darij Fund Mawarid Fund	NIC	Monthly Monthly	Dec 31, 2017 Dec 31, 2017		0.351 0.570	0.349 0.457	Nov 30, 20 Nov 30, 20
	Zajil Fund	NIC	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017		0.712	0.718	Nov 30, 20
	Al Mada Investment Fund	NIC	Weekly	Dec 31, 2017		0.768	0.771	Nov 30, 201
Kuwait Financi	al Centre (Markaz)	Kuwait Financial Contor	Maakk	lan 10, 0010	VP.	4.004	4.000	lan 11 001
	Mumtaz Fund MIDAF	Kuwait Financial Center Kuwait Financial Center	Weekly Weekly	Jan 18, 2018 Jan 18, 2018		4.284 3.288	4.266 3.266	Jan 11, 201 Jan 11, 201
	Islamic Fund	Kuwait Financial Center	Weekly	Jan 18, 2018		1.625	1.618	Jan 11, 20
	FORSA Financial Fund	Kuwait Financial Center	Monthly	Nov 30, 2017	' KD	0.996	1.013	Oct 31, 201
	Real Estate Fund	Kuwait Financial Center	Monthly	Nov 30, 2017		1.388	1.390	Oct 31, 201
	Markaz Fixed Income Fund	Kuwait Financial Center	Monthly	Jan 18, 2018		11.680	11.680	Jan 11, 201
	Markaz MENA Islamic Fund	Kuwait Financial Center	Weekly	Jan 15, 2017	USD	10.070	10.740	Dec 28, 20

	Funds 	Fund Manager	Valuation 	Valued date	Currency	Net Asset Value (NAV)	Prev NAV	Prev NAV Date
Kuwait & Mi	ddle East Financial & Inv. Co.							
	Al Rou'yah Fund	KMEFIC	Monthly	Nov 30, 2017	7 KD	1.359	1.487	Sept 30, 2017
Global Invest	tment House							
Index Funds	GCC Large Cap Index Fund	Global	Weekly	Jan 11, 2018	KD.	1.264	1.208	Dec 21, 2017
Equity Funds	Al-Mamoun Fund A	Global	Weekly	Jan 11, 2018	KD.	0.690	0.660	Dec 21, 2017
. ,	Al-Mamoun Fund B	Global	Weekly	Jan 11, 2018	KD.	0.690	0.660	Dec 21, 2017
	GCC Large Cap Fund	Global	Bi-weekly	Jan 9, 2018	USD		145.450	Dec 19, 2017
	Global Saudi Equity Fund	Global	Bi-weekly	Jan 9, 2018	SAR	223.870	220.470	Dec 19, 2017
Sectoral Funds	EPADI Fund	Global	Weekly	Jan 9, 2018	USD	97.040	95.600	Dec 19, 2017
Islamic Funds	Global GCC Islamic Fund	Global	Weekly	Jan 9, 2018	USD	100.150	98.120	Dec 19, 2017
	Al-Durra Islamic Fund	Global	Monthly	Jan 11, 2018	KD.	1.301	1.253	Dec 21, 2017
 Kuwait Finar	nce & Investment Co (KFIC)							
Kuwait i illai	Al Wasm Fund	KFIC	Weekly	Jan 10, 2018	KD.	0.428	0.416	Nov 30, 2017
	Al Basha'er GCC Equity Fund	KFIC	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017			6.929	Nov 30, 2017
KAMCO								
KANIOU	KAMCO Investment Fund	KAMCO	Monthly	Nov 30, 2017	7 KD	1.110	1.163	Oct 31, 2017
	KAMCO Real Estate Yield Fund	KAMCO	,	Dec 31, 2017			10.090	Oct 31, 2017
	ational Investment Co							
wana mitem	ational Investment Co. Wafra Equity Fund	Wafra Co.	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017	7 KD	0.921	0.908	Nov 30, 2017
	Wafra Bond Fund	Wafra Co.	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017		1.024	1.003	Nov 30, 2017
	Masaref Investment Fund	ISKAN	Weekly	Dec 31, 2017		0.866	0.848	Nov 30, 2017
	Fajir Islamic Fund	Wafra Co.	Monthly	Dec 31, 2017		0.690	0.681	Nov 30, 2017
Al Aman Inve								
AI AIIIAII IIIVE	Al Aman Islamic Fund	Al Aman Investment	Weekly	Dec 30, 2017	7 KD	0.316	0.315	Nov 30, 2017
Tharwa Inve								
I iiai wa iiive:	Tharwa Investment Fund	Tharwa Investment Co	Weekly	Dec 21, 2017	7 KD	1,461	1,480	Oct 31, 2017
	Tharwa Islamic Fund	Tharwa Investment Co	Monthly	Dec 21, 2017		0.603	0.619	Oct 31, 2017
Bank Al-Bila	ч 							
Dalik Al-Dila	Al Seef Fund	Bank Al-Bilad	Daily	Jan 14, 2018	KD.	0.430	0.410	Dec 24, 2017
Commercial	International Bank							
	CIB Money Market Fund (Osoul)	CI Asset Management	Weekly	Jan 24, 2018	EGP	316.080	315.320	Jan 18, 2018
	CIB II Equity (Isthethmar)	CI Asset Management	Weekly	Jan 24, 2018			192.020	Jan 18, 2018
	CIB and Faisal Islamic Al Aman	CI Asset Management	Weekly	Jan 24, 2018			103.050	Jan 18, 2018
	Hemaya	CI Asset Management	Weekly	Jan 2, 2018	EGP		189.000	Nov 3, 2017
	Thabat	CI Asset Management	Weekly	Jan 24, 2018			195.810	Jan 18, 2018
	Takamol	CI Asset Management	Weekly	Jan 24, 2018			170.220	Jan 14, 2018
	Misr El Mostakbel	CI Asset Management	Weekly	Jan 21, 2018			26.600	Jan 18, 2018
VEU Conital								
ni ii vapital	Investment Co. Muthanna Islamic Index Fund (MUDX)	KFH Capital Investment Co	Daily	Nov 30, 2017	7 KD	0.374	0.405	Sept 30, 201
	Muthanna GCC Islamic banks Fund	KFH Capital Investment Co	Daily	Nov 30, 2017		0.669	0.403	Sept 30, 201
	Baitak GCC Fund	KFH Capital Investment Co	Weekly	June 29, 201		0.930	0.916	Feb 28, 2017
Noor Financi	ial Investment Co.							
NOUI FIIIAIIUI	Noor Islamic Fund	Noor Financial Investment Co	Monthly	Nov 30, 2016	6 KD	0.374	0.405	Sept 30, 201
CapCorp Inve	CanCorn Local Fund	CanCorn Investment Company	Wookh	Cont 20 201	7 KD	1 000	0.001	Aug 20, 201

CapCorp Investment Company

Aramco to launch construction tenders

State oil producer Saudi Aramco is expected to launch a tender in July to build facilities to expand its Marjan oilfield while another tender for the Berri oilfield expansion is expected by the third or fourth quarter of this year, in-

dustry sources said. The planned projects are further proof that Saudi Aramco is pushing ahead with oil investments to maintain capacity while also meeting domestic

demand for gas to fuel indus-

trial growth.
International engineering and construction firms have expressed interest in bidding to build oil and gas facilities at Marjan oilfield whose development is expected to cost more than \$10

The expansion will increase the capacity of Marjan, currently at 500,000 barrels per day, by 300,000 bpd of Arab medium

A new gas plant in Tanajib which will handle 2.7 billion standard cubic feet per day is due to be built and the capacity of the NGL fractionation plant at Wasit will expand too.

As for Berri, development could cost between \$6-8 billion. Aramco plans to raise capacity at the field by 250,000 bpd of Arab light and raise production of associated gas. (RTRS)

Kuwait's stocks kick off month on sluggish note

Ooredoo jumps 45 fils; Markaz drops

By John Mathews **Arab Times Staff**

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Kuwait stocks trod water on Thursday as it kicked off the month on tepid note. The price index ticked 2.58 points down in choppy trade to 6685.23 pts even as the broader sentiment remained mixed. Ooredoo logged impressive gains and some of the banks too saw buying interest.

The KSX 15 gauge rose 2.77 points to 943.58 pts while weighted index edged 0.84 points higher to 4112.82 pts. The volume turnover meanwhile dipped below the 100 million mark to hit a one-month low. 76.46 million shares changed hands – a 28.9 pct drop from the day before.

The sectors closed mostly in red. Technology outled the rest with 1.69 percent gain whereas oil and gas shed 1.59 pct, the biggest loser of the day. Volume wise, real estate accounted for the highest market share of 34.9 pct and financial services followed with 24.7 percent contribution.

Among standout performers, National Bank of Kuwait rallied 6 fils to 746 fils on back of 1.9 million shares and Commercial Bank of Kuwait jumped 20 fils to 100 fils. Mabanee Co dropped 16 fils to 719 fils and Kuwait Financial Centre (Markaz) was down 7 fils at 104 fils.

Zain fell 4 fils to 468 fils after trading 2.8 million shares and Ooredoo surged 45 fils to KD 1.190 with thin volume. Kuwait Telecommunications VIVA) fell 5 fils or 785 fils and Agility took in 2 fils to close at

Burgan Bank clipped 2 fils and Kuwait Finance House added 3 fils. The bank has registered a 10 pct rise in profits to KD 46.29 percent during Q4, 2017 compared to the same period in 2016. In fiscal year 2017, profits was up 11.5 pct to KD 184.16 m.

The market opened wobbly and edged slightly higher in early trade. The main index scaled the day's highest level of 6692 pts and see-sawed past the midsession. It drifted further down to bottom at a 6660 pts before clawing back most of the losses at close.

Top gainer of the day, Kuwait Cable Vision Co vaulted 20 pct to 22.8 fils and Jiyad climbed 10.97

pct to stand next. Tahssilat slid 13.49 pct, the steepest decliner of the day and Ithmaar Bank topped the volume with over 11 million

Reflecting the day's downtick, the losers outnumbered the winners. 41 stocks advanced whereas 55 closed lower. Of the 119 counters active on Thursday, 23 closed flat. 3453 deals worth KD 10.23 million were transacted – a 33.7 percent drop in value from the day

National Industries Group ticked 1 fil higher to 163 fils while Gulf Cable gave up 2 fils. Metal and Recycling Co and Kuwait Foundry Co dropped 3 fils each and Equipment Holding Co trimmed 0.6 fil. Heavy Engineering Industries and Shipbuilding Co was down 4 fils at 197 fils.

Portland Cement Kuwait climbed 10 fils to KD 1.020 and Shuaiba Industrial stood pat at 250 fils. Boubyan Petrochemical Co slipped 9 fils to 703 fils and Al Qurain Petrochemical dialed up 1

Paused

Kuwait National Cinema Co paused at KD 1.130 and Independent Petroleum Group dived 30 fils to 400 fils erasing last session's gains. Mezzan Holding slid 18 fils to 760 fils.

Jazeera Airways eased 1 fil to 648 fils and ALAFCO rose 4 fils. The company's profit soared 49.6 pct to KD 7.78 million during the first quarter ended on 31 December 2017 from the same period a year

Humansoft Holding shed 9 fils and NAPESCO was up 5 fils at 805 fils. The company's fourth quarter earnings rose 2 pct to KD 2.02 m in from KD 1.98 million in the same period a year earlier and in 2017. earnings surged 30.1 pct to KD

Combined Group Contracting Co and FutureKid rose 3 fils each to close at 464 fils and 111 fils respectively whereas Invovest close 1.7 fils in green. Kuwait and Gulf Link Transport Co clipped 1 fil and KGL Logistics inched 0.2

In the banking sector, Kuwait International Bank eased 1 fil to 224 fils whereas Gulf Bank and Al Mutahed stood pat at 349 fils. Al Ahli Bank was not traded during the session.

Boubyan Bank was unchanged at 460 fils and Warba Bank gave up 2 fils to close at 222 fils.

Kuwait Investment Co took in 1 fil and National Investment Co added 2 fils to close at 102 fils. KIPCO paused at 300 fils and International Financial Advisors ticked 0.1 fil into red. Coast Investment Co fell 0.6 fil to 34.4

Bayan Investment Co fell 2.2 fils to 42.8 fils while Al Mal Investment Co and Al Aman closed flat. Unicap rose 1.7 fils to 48.8 fils and Al Deera Holding edged 1 fil up. KFIC ticked 0.1 fil into

Noor Financial Investment Co trimmed 0.1 fil while Al Imtiaz and Kuwait Insurance Co were flat at 152 fils and 280 fils respectively. KMEFIC added 1.5 fils and Securities House Co gave up 0.9

Kuwait Real Estate Co dialed up 0.8 fil while National Real Estate Co And Salhiya Real Estate paused at 122 fils and 350 fils respectively. Sanam Real Estate clipped 2 fils and Mazaya Holding inched 1 fil up.

The bourse was mixed during the week. The main index closed higher in two of the five sessions and gained 34 points week-onweek. It has rallied 257 pts during whole of January and is trading 43.33 pct higher year-to-date. KSE, with 188 listed companies, is the second largest bourse in the

In the bourse related news, Agar Real Estate Investments' fourth quarter profits dropped by 14.7 pct from the same period last year to to KD 732,000. During fiscal year 2017, earnings saw a marginal vear-on-year rise of 1.1 percent to KD 1.76 million. The board of directors has recommended cash dividend of 6 pct or 6 fils per share for FY17.

Al Imtiaz Investment Group slipped into red in the fourth quarter of 2017 as it incurred KD 2.9 million in losses in the quarter against profit of KD 6.7 million in the year-ago period. In the full-year 2017, it posted a profit of KD 30.85 mln, up 124.7% from previous year. The company attributed its higher annual profits to selling a part of its stake in an associate,

Yiaco Medical has recorded a loss of KD 482,100 in the July -Sept period, down 10.4% from in the same period of 2016. In the first nine-month of 2017, the losses stood at KD 8.9 million – a 271.8 pct surge in losses from same period of 2016.

Qurain Petrochemical Industries posted a 10.2 pct in profits to KD 5.47 million during the third quarter ended 31 Dec, 2017 from same period last year. During the nine months ended on 31 Dec, the profits fell 3.3 pct to KD 16.03 million from 9M, 2016.

Mideast Stocks

Q4 loss hits Saudi Ma'aden

Gulf stock markets mostly firm

DUBAI, Feb 1, (RTRS): Gulf stock markets were mostly firm on Thursday but blue chip Saudi Arabian Mining Co (Ma'aden) fell in response to a surprise fourthquarter loss.

The Saudi index edged up 0.1 percent with gainers outnumbering advancers by 100 to 76. Ma'aden slipped 4.9 percent to 53.80 riyals in its heaviest trade since November, although it closed well off the day's low of 52.70 rivals.

It posted a net profit of 714.84 million riyals (\$190.6 million) in 2017 versus a loss of 10.74 million riyals in 2016; it did not publish fourth-quarter earnings, but Reuters calculations show it made quarterly loss of 104.74 million riyals versus a year-ago profit of 15.67 million riyals.

SICO Bahrain had projected a quarterly profit of 374 million riyals. Ma'aden's earnings statement gave no reason for the fourth-quarter loss and company officials could not be reached for comment.

Cement shares remained strong

and actively traded after a media report earlier this week said the government had started awarding contracts to build its huge NEOM business zone project in the northwest of the country.

Tabuk Cement, which is located near the site of NEOM, rose 1.7 percent while Tabuk Agricultural Development, also located nearby, gained 1.0 percent in its heaviest trade for a month.

In Dubai, the index rose 0.5 percent as shipper Gulf Navigation, which has been trading at 18-month lows, surged 7.9 percent after saying it had appointed a bookrunner to raise its capital to 1 billion dirhams (\$272 million) through a rights issue this

month. Abu Dhabi's index gained 0.3 percent and Qatar edged up 0.03 percent as Qatar Commercial Bank rose 1.6 after its chief executive said on Wednesday that it would deploy more capital to Turkey to benefit from closer political ties with that country.

Saudi Arabia ■ Index edged up 0.1 percent to

■ Index rose 0.5 percent to 3,412

7,656 points.

9,207 points.

Abu Dhabi ■ Index gained 0.3 percent to

4,614 points. **Oatar** ■ Index edged up 0.03 percent to

Egypt

■ Index rose 0.3 percent to 15,089 points.

Kuwait ■ Index edged down 0.04 percent

to 6,685 points.

■ Index rose 0.5 percent to 1,358 Oman

■ Index climbed 0.7 percent to 5,035 points.

Price Index 6,685.2 -2.58 -0.04% -0.04% 4.33% Volume (000 shares) 76,463 -31,083 -28,09% 11 KUWAIT15 Index 943.6 2.77 0.29% 0.29% 3.14% Value (000 kWD) 10,238 -5,206 -33.71% 1 Weighted Index 412.8 0.84 0.20% 0.20% 2.24% Trades 3,453 -821 -19.21% Market Cap (KWD Million) 28,032.4 59.21 0.21% 0.21% 2.90% 2.90% Value Close Vol Traded Oncombook Trades Beta Dividend Value Oncombook P/E P/E<	2018
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sectors' average is a weighted average based on market cap. Companies with different fiscal years are treated on an individual basis. (NA not applicable, NM Not meaningful). # Avg. daily trading volume for new companies is based on the number of trading days, also the bitsing date, as for the sectors and the market it is based on trading days, since the beginning of the year. YTO 17 return for individual stocks and sectors is calculated based on the change in market cap, more information please contact KAMCO Investment Research Dept. at e-mail: karnoo_research@karnoonline.com. http:// www.karnoonline.com	

Etihad scrambles to shore up \$1.2 bln bonds

Etihad Airways is urgently examining ways to avert a technical default of some \$1.2 billion in bonds indirectly linked to the Gulf airline, sources close to the situation told Reuters.

An Amsterdam-based special purpose vehicle called SPV Equity Alliance Partners (EAP) was set up in 2015 and issued two bonds for Etihad and other airlines it partially owned at the time, including Álitalia and Air Berlin, which are both now insol-

The bonds are quoted at a discount of more than 25 cents on the dollar after Alitalia entered special administration and Air Berlin filed for bankruptcy protection last year.

Etihad could now end up spending hundreds of millions of dollars to keep the bond struc-ture alive, although it is not legally obliged to do so as there is

no cross-default provision in the bond documentation, the sources said.

With more than \$400 million of EAP debt in the hands of United Arab Emirates investors, there is political and reputational pressure on the Abu Dhabi carrier to avoid a default in March and Etihad is holding internal talks to assess whether and how to support the bonds, the sources said.

Apple challenged to show iPhone star shines

With Apple set to report quarterly results Thursday investors and others are cautiously watching to see whether its newest iPhone will help fuel momentum for the world's most valuable company.

Despite Apple's spectacular trajectory in the decade since the introduction of the iPhone, the California technology titan is facing challenges on whether it can continue growth.

Stocks edge higher in cautious

trade; dollar pares gain vs yen

Apple's image meanwhile has been bruised by revelations that the company updated its mobile software to slow the performance of old iPhones as batteries weaken from age.

Apple share price has eroded in recent weeks on speculation that sales of its flagship iPhone X have been far less than ex-

The company is staking much

of its future on the redesigned iP-hone X — the 10th anniversary edition of the iconic handset introduced last year.

Although Apple does not normally break down sales by individual models, some analysts have expressed concern that the newest and most expensive iPhone is a laggard, while others say Apple has delivered on its promise with a fuller range of handsets. (AFP)

the **bottomline**

SAN FRANCISCO: Microsoft on

Wednesday reported a hefty loss in the past quarter, as it set aside billions of dollars for taxes on profits it expects to bring back to the United States follow-

ing passage of a major tax overhaul. The technology giant said its loss for the quarter to Dec 31 was \$6.3 billion -- as it took a charge of \$13.8

billion to pay its taxes.

Revenue for Microsoft's fiscal second quarter rose 12 percent to \$28.9 billion as it saw gains in business services and cloud computing.

Once the world's largest technology company, Microsoft has been rebooting as consumers shift away from Windows-powered computers to mobile devices. (AFP)

SAN FRANCISCO: Facebook on

Wednesday reported a big jump in profits even though people are spending less time on the world's biggest social network.

The company said its priority is to encourage personal interaction among users, rather than simply boost the number of hours they spend on Face-book. Co-founder Mark Zuckerberg said changes enacted by Facebook cut time spent on the site by some 50 million hours per day. But Facebook's chief operating officer argued that having users engage more with friends posts could lead to further financial opportunities for the company.

Facebook said that profit in the final three months of last year climbed 20 percent to \$4.26 billion as both ad revenue and ranks of members grew. (AFP)

ATLANTA: United Parcel Service Inc (US on Thursday reported fourth-quarter net income of \$1.1 billion, after reporting a loss in the same period a year earlier. The Atlanta-based company said it had profit of \$1.27 per share. Earnings, adjusted for non-recurring costs, were \$1.67 per share.

The results exceeded Wall Street expectations. The average estimate of 11 analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research was for earnings of \$1.65 per share. The package delivery service posted revenue of \$18.83 billion in the period, also surpassing Street forecasts Eight analysts surveyed by Zacks expected \$18.19 billion. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Time Warner beat Wall Street expectations with a robust fourth quarter earnings report that was powered by record subscriber growth at HBO and interest in Major League

Baseball's post-season. Time Warner's adjusted earnings er-share topped out at \$2.66 on \$8.6 billion in revenue, a better-thananticipated result. Operating income increased 13% to \$1.9 billion and adjusted operating income climbed 9% to \$1.9 billion. Analysts had projected earnings per share of \$1.43 on revenue of \$8.42 billion. Without adjustment, earnings per share hit \$1.75. (RTRS)

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: German luxury carmaker **Daimler** on Thursday announced record profits for 2017 on the back of strong SUV and truck sales, but the results were overshadowed by the firm's connection to controversial diesel exhaust tests on

monkeys. Daimler said net profits soared by 24 percent last year to 10.9 billion euros (\$13.5 billion), while revenues were up seven percent to 164 billion, in line with analyst expectations.

BEC

travellers cheques

exchange rates - Feb 1

Draft Transfer

US dollar

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"The Daimler workforce has once again succeeded in breaking the records set in the previous year," chief executive Dieter Zetsche said in a statement. (AFP)

HELSINKI: Nokia has reported better than expected fourth quarter earnings as a result of a one-off license fee from China's Huawei, but said short-term outlook for its core network business remained bleak despite an upward

trend in North American sales. The Espoo, Finland -based maker of telecommunications gear said Thursday that its net profit for the October-December period was 709 million euros (\$883 million) against 672

million a year earlier. Profits were boosted by a one-off patent payment of 210 million euros but operating profit from the networks business was down 25 percent. Sales were flat at 6.7 billion euros. (AP)

GENEVA: Swiss pharmaceuticals company Roche saw a modest 3 percent rise in underlying profits last year, largely as a result of a strong performance in the United States.

The Basel-based company, which employs 94,000 worldwide, said core operating profit rose to 19.01 billion Swiss francs (\$20.4 billion) in 2017. up from 18.42 billion francs a year earlier. Net profit fell 9 percent to 8.825 billion francs as a result of a series of charges. Roche, which does not break out its fourth-quarter results. also projected core earnings would rise in the high-single digits in percentage points this year. (AP)

THE HAGUE: Food and consumer products giant Unilever Thursday posted soaring 2017 profits of 6.5 billion euros (\$8.05 billion), after a year of "major change" when it spurned a Kraft Heinz takeover bid.

The announcement came a day after Unilever announced it was adding to its popular ice-cream ranges, which include Magnum, by scooping up Romania's leading ice-cream maker, Betty Ice, for an undisclosed price.

Net profit leaped 16.9 percent on sales of 53.7 billion euros, up 1.9 percent year-on-year, which chief executive Paul Polman said "demonstrates the progress we have made in transforming Unilever into a more resilient and more agile business". (AFP)

MILAN: Italian sports car maker Ferrari says profits last year rose 34 percent, driven by a surge in V12 sales and vehicle personalization.

Ferrari on Thursday reported 2017 net profit of 537 million euros (\$669 million), up from 400 million euros the previous year. Shipments last year rose by 5 percent to 8,398 vehicles, while net revenues increased 10 percent to 3.4 billion euros.

Ferrari aims to top 9,000 vehicles shipments this year and is forecasting revenues above 3.4 billion euros. (AP)

BEIJING: Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Thursday posted a 35 percent surge in net profit in the third quarter, fuelled by a record-breaking sales bonanza during its annual Singles Day shopping festival.

The company said profit jumped to 24.1 billion yuan (\$3.7 billion)

Euro

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3739830

Sterling pound

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Oil rises as OPEC compliance eclipses US output boom

NEW YORK, Feb 1, (Agencies): The dollar eased and global equity markets edged higher on Thursday as a note of caution over rising interest rates and high stock valuations dampened investors' appetite for risk assets after a euphoric January in markets.

A fresh slide in drugmakers and a plunge in PayPal shares offset gains in Facebook, AT&T and eBay, which shot up almost 15 per-

European shares, as marked by the pan-regional STOXX 600 index, fell for a fourth day, led lower by Danish drugmaker Novo Nordisk after its operating profit fell short of expecta-

MSCI's gauge of stocks across the globe shed 0.04 percent while stocks on Wall Street rose after spending much of the early session trading little changed.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 105.95 points, or 0.41 percent, to 26,255.34. he S&P 500 gained 8.55 points, or 0.30 percent, to 2,832.36 and the Nasdaq Composite added 12.60 points, or 0.17 percent, to 7,424.08.

In Europe, the STOXX 600 fell 0.59 percent and the pan-regional FTSEurofirst 300 index lost 0.70 percent.

Stretched valuations, a long overdue pullback in stocks, and uncertainty over a potential shutdown of the US federal government are driving a sense of caution in the market, said Peter Kenny, senior market strategist at Global Markets Advisory Group in New York.

The dollar, which fell 3.25 percent in January to mark its worst monthly performance since March 2016, pared gains against the yen as stocks fell in Europe and treaded water on Wall Street.

The dollar struggled in January as expected monetary policy-tightening elsewhere in the world, along with stronger global economic growth, encouraged investors to go abroad, particularly the euro zone.

The dollar index fell 0.35 percent, with the euro up 0.45 percent to \$1.2476. The Japanese yen weakened 0.30 percent versus the greenback at 109.53 per dollar.

Oil rose after a survey showed the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' commitment to its supply cuts remains in place, even as US production topped 10 million

Swiss franc

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Japanese ven

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Draft Transfer

at \$69.15, up 0.38 percent on the day.

US stocks were lower in late morning trading on Thursday, following a string of lackluster earnings and after the Federal Reserve raised its inflation outlook for the year.

At 10:44 am ET (1544 GMT), the Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 50.26 points, or 0.19 percent, at 26,099.13, the S&P 500 was down 2.77 points, or 0.09 percent, at 2,821.04.

The Nasdaq Composite was up 7.84 points, or 0.11 percent, at 7,419.32.

Eight of the 11 major S&P indexes were lower, with the materials index's 1.21 percent fall leading the decliners.

Strong fourth-quarter reports from S&P 500 companies so far have pushed up analysts' profit growth estimate to 13.7 percent, from 12 percent at the start of the month.

However, expectations from earnings have gone up and companies that don't do well are being punished more harshly, Zipper said.

USdropped 6.6 percent after the world's largest package delivery company reported a fourth-quarter net profit that was hurt by additional

Cigna, Alibaba, DowDuPont were all lower after reporting quarterly re-

PayPal fell 7.2 percent after former parent eBay said it planned to move to a new primary payment pro-

Facebook rose 3.5 percent after the company forecast rising ad sales, despite a dip in usage on the social media network. Industry heavyweights Apple, Al-

phabet and Amazon are due to report results after the bell. Declining issues outnumbered advancers on the NYSE by 1,636 to

1,138. On the Nasdaq, 1,565 issues fell and 1,153 advanced.

The S&P 500 index showed 19 new 52-week highs and 4 new lows, while the Nasdaq recorded 45 new highs and 44 new lows.

Europe

Vodafone posted a disappointing trading update on Wednesday and dragged British shares into a third day of losses as outsourcing firms failed to recover after Capita's profit warning during the previous session.

The FTSE 100 fell 0.6 percent to a six-week low with most European bourses also closing in negative ter-

Intense competition in Spain and

Swedish krona

.034063 .034062 .034062

Draft Transfer

Shell shares also weighed heavily, falling 2.8 percent after its results showed weaker quarterly cash generation than expected.

Shares of British outsourcing companies also ended in the red, failing to recover from Capita's profit warning on Wednesday as the collapse of Carillion clouds the sector.

Interserve, Capita, Mitie and Serco fell 19.6 percent, 13.1 percent, 6.9 percent and 3.4 percent respectively.

IWG tumbled 14.4 percent after Canadian private equity firm Onex and Brookfield Asset Management said they would not make an offer for the British serviced office provider.

Building products distributor SIG retreated 4.1 percent after it said its 2016 profit was overstated.

A stand-out performer was NEX Group, jumping 7.7 percent after the financial technology firm said "noticeably" more active markets this year had helped its revenues rise.

Private equity group 3i rose 1.9 percent after reporting a rise in net asset value per share, after increasing its valuation of its ten biggest portfolio investments.

With sterling enjoying its best month against the dollar since 2009 in January, the FTSE 100 — whose companies derive around 70 percent of earnings from overseas — has been under pressure.

Asia

The dollar ticked up in Asian trade Thursday on expectations the Federal Reserve will speed up interest rate hikes this year.

On equity markets Tokyo surged on a weaker yen and bargain-buying following a six-day losing streak. Sydney climbed 0.9 percent, Singapore put on 0.3 percent and Seoul was 0.1 percent higher, while there were also gains in Manila, Taipei and

However, Hong Hong, which last month clocked up a series of record highs, closed down 0.8 percent while Shanghai sank one percent

Mumbai rose 0.3 percent after Finance Minister Arun Jaitley unveiled the government's final full budget before next year's election, putting aside more than \$200 billion to invest in poor rural areas and to help struggling farmers.

Regional stocks have mostly fallen this week on profit-taking following a blistering January that saw many indexes hit record or multiyear highs.

■ Key figures around 0820 GMT Tokyo - Nikkei 225: UP 1.7 percent at 23,486.11 (close)

Hong Kong - Hang Seng: DOWN 0.8 percent at 32,642.09 (close)

Saudi riyal

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Draft Transfer

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10.570

UAE dirham

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.077327 .077327

10 gm 999

127,450

All rates in KD per unit of

foreign currency

Oil - West Texas Intermediate: UP four cents at \$64.77 per barrel

Oil rose on Thursday after a survey showed OPEC's commitment to its supply cuts remains in place, even as US production topped 10 million barrels per day for the first time since

Brent April crude futures rose 59 cents to \$69.48 a barrel by 1438, while NYMEX crude for March delivery also rose 59 cents to \$65.32.

Brent crude rose by 3.3 percent in January, its strongest start to the year for five years, in line with a broad rise in other risk-linked assets such as US equities, which hit record highs last month and marked their biggest January increase since 1997.

With investors now pondering which of oil's current key driving forces will prove dominant -- rising US crude output or OPEC's adherence to its supply cuts -- the relationship with equities and even the dollar is likely to erode.

Goldman Sachs raised its threemonth forecast for Brent to \$75 from \$62 and its six-month forecast to \$82.50 from \$75.

OPEC oil output rose in January from eight-month lows as higher output from Nigeria and Saudi Arabia offset declines in Venezuela and strong compliance with the OPECled supply pact, according to a Reuters survey.

Gold edged lower on Thursday as investors shifted their focus to US jobs data due at the end of the week for guidance on monetary policy for the rest of the year.

Spot gold was down 0.2 percent at \$1,341.93 per ounce, as of 1524 GMT. It touched \$1,332.30 an ounce in the previous session, its lowest since Jan 23. US gold futures for February delivery were up 0.2 percent to \$1,345.20 per ounce.

The US Fed held interest rates unchanged on Wednesday but raised its inflation outlook and flagged "further gradual" rate increases.

'There is a possibility that the dollar could rise again and if we have stronger-than-expected jobs data (on Friday) then that would be bad news for gold," said FOREX.com analyst Fawad Razaqzada.

Gold gained just 3.2 percent in January as the dollar fell to threeyear lows against a basket of major currencies. It hit a 17-month peak of \$1,366.07 on Jan. 25. The dollar index inched lower af-

Bahraini dinar Draft Transfer Omani rival

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Draft Transfer

Italy took the shine off Vodafone's barrels per day for the first time since ter the Fed signalled its confidence Shanghai - Composite: DOWN 1.0 percent at 3,446.98 (close) third-quarter revenues and sent the about inflation and growth in the US between October and December, com-US crude rose 0.9 percent to shares of the world's second largest economy, reinforcing views it will pared to 17.9 billion yuan in the same \$65.31 per barrel and Brent was last quarter in 2016. (AFP) mobile operator down 4.5 percent. Dollar/yen: UP at 109.60 yen from raise rates several times this year.

Draft Transfer

Canadian dollar

.238610 .236610 .236610

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	Sell	.300770	.300450 .300450	.427980 .428080 .428080	.374939 .374539 .374539	.002843 .002843 .002843	.326896 .323896 .323896	.247610 .246610 .246610	.039063 .039062 .039062	.080333 .080173 .080173	.082076 .081827 .081827	.798882 .798382 .798382	.779751 .779773 .779773
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Gulf Bank	Buy	.299050	.299050 .299050	.423780 .423780 .423780	.369780 .369780 .369780	.000272 .000272 .000272	.319320 .319320 .319320	.241780 .241780 .241780	.037900 .037900 .037900	.079610 .079610 .079610	.081220 .081220 .081220	.789420 .789420 .789420	.775360 .775360 .775360
	Sell	.301150	.301150 .301150	.432480 .432480 .432480	.377350 .377350 .377350	.000276 .000276 .000276	.325820 .325820 .325820	.246730 .246730 .246730	.038330 .038330 .038330	.080700 .080700 .080700	.082260 .082260 .082260	.801230 .801230 .801230	.786160 .786160 .786160
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Burgan Bank	Buy	_	.299050 .299050	426086 .426086	371704 .371704	002729 .002729	320989 .320989	242981 .242981	037966 .037966	079635 .079635	081308 .081308	782894 .782894	766765 .766765
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ABK	Buy	.298450	.300950 .300950	.396510 .399560 .399560	.354510 .357180 .357180	027938 .027938	324052 .324052	249603 .249603	034490 .034490	.079290 .079300 .079300	.082203 .081250 .081250	— .788840 .788840	— .774320 .781712
	Sell	.304550	.303050 .303050	.407830 .407850 .407850	.364920 .365200 .365200	027344 .027344	312040 .312040	239920 .239920	035840 .035840	.082010 .081350 .081350	.083029 .083130 .083130	809320 .809320	794270 .790029
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	Sell		.301150 .301150	.432529 .429319 .429319	.378012 .375112 .375112	002761 .002761	324515 .324515	245536 .245536	038235 .038235	.080901 .080410 .080410	.082618 .082115 .082115	.807330 .799549 .799549	.790103 .782553 .782553
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		Dar	nish krone	Indian rupee	Pakistani rupee	Sri Lanka rupee	Bangladesh taka	Philippine peso	Australian dollar	Hong Kong dollar	Singapore dollar	Jordanian dinar	Egyptian pound
		Cash	Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer
BEC	Buv		.046038 .046038	.004223 .004654 .004654	.002528 .002684 .002684	.001688 .001909 .001909	.003247 .003594 .003594	.005847 .005393 .005393	.233179 .231178 .231178	.036328 .035827 .035827	.223468 .224468 .224468	.419146 .417974 .417974	.014067 .016268 .016268
DLU	,												.019785 .017130 .017130
	Sell	.051038	.051038 .051038	.004864 .004732 .004732	.002818 .002716 .002716	.002268 .001951 .001951	.003831 .003615 .003615	.006147 .005860 .005860	.245179 .244178 .244178	.039078 .038927 .038927	.233468 .230468 .230468	.428146 .425474 .425474	
Muzaini	Sell	_		.004719 .004875 .004875	.002722 .002950 .002950	.001951 .002270 .002270	.003650 .003850 .003850	.005890 .006250 .006250		038566 .038566	228620 .228620	425320 .425320	.019700 .017020 .017020
Dollarco	Sell	_		.004875 .004721 .004721	.002950 .002715 .002715	.002270 .001948 .001948	.003850 .003640 .003640	.006250 .005824 .005824				.427000 .424545 .424545	.018500 .017024 .017024
Commercial Bar	k Buy	_	.049972 .049972	.004000 — —		.002000 — —	– – –	.005000 — —	.240000 .239644 .239644	038238 .038238	227926 .227926	.420000 — —	.012000 — —
	Sell	_	.050323 .050323	.006500 .004744 .004744	002729 .002729	.003500 .001957 .001957	003641 .003641	.007900 .005864 .005864	.249000 .241327 .241327	038507 .038507	229526 .229526	.433000 .425263 .425263	.023000 .017580 .017580
Gulf Bank	Buv	049840	.049840 .049840						.239390 .239390 .239390	.038030 .038030 .038030	.227380 .227380 .227380		
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	Sell	_	.050400 .050400	— .004750 .004750	002737 .002737	001965 .001965		005870 .005870	— .243720 .243720		230290 .230290	— .427770 .427770	017160 .017160
Burgan Bank	Buy	_	.499407 .499407	— .004681 .004681	002691 .002691	001936 .001936	003590 .003590	— .005779 .005779	— .239778 .239778		227717 .227717	— .420900 .420900	016282 .016282
	Sell	_	.050316 .050316	004743 .004743	002727 .002727	001956 .001956	003641 .003641	005854 .005854	241612 .241612		229456 .229456	— .425052 .425052	017791 .017791
ABK	Buv	_	.045090 .045090	046371 .046371					227710 .227710	038760 .038760	222770 .222770	423280 .423280	016080 .016080
	Sell	_	.047290 .047290	047838 .047838	004668 .004668	002119 .002119		006648 .006648	232950 .232950	039210 .039210	226670 .226670	431960 .431960	018240 .018240
KFH	Buy	_	.049661 .049661	004655 .004655	002682 .002682	001935 .001935	003566 .003566	005741 .005741	237984 .237984		226673 .226673	420723 .420723	016921 .016921
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	Sell	_	.050360 .050360	004762 .004762	002737 .002737	001963 .001963	003667 .003667	005896 .005896	— .242877 .242877		230096 .230096	— .425233 .425233	017091 .017091
KBE	Sell	_		004694 .004694	004694 .004694	001984 .001984	003778 .003778	006060 .006060					016990 .016990
		Сур	rus pound	Yemeni riyal	Thai baht	South African rand	Korean won	Syrian pound	Iranian Riyal	Lebanese pound	Malaysian ringgit	Indonesian rupiah	New Zealand dollar
		Cash	Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer	Cash Draft Transfer
BEC	Buy	_		.000976 .001148 .001148	.009214 .009161 .009161		.000270 — —	.001273 .000491 .000491	.000083 — —	.000148 .000182 .000182	.073756 .072155 .072155	.000018 .000017 .000017	.214886 .212885 .212885
DLU	Sell	_		.001056 .001248 .001248	.009764 .009576 .009576		.000270	.001493 .000711 .000711	.000084 — —	.000248 .000202 .000202	.079756 .079155 .079155	.000024 .000024 .000024	.224386 .223885 .223885
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Dollarco	Sell	_	.017865 .017865		.009250 .010560 .010560			.000610 .001585 .001585			.071600 .077850 .077850		
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1,426.660

385.640

11.070



Swooping Eagles Team



X Strikers Team

Al Qassem All Stars shame Pin Killers

Asian Air Safari topple Swooping Eagles to stay in 'Super 6'

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: Asian Air Sa fari thwarted Swooping Eagles dream of retaining exclusive membership in the 'Super 6' when they were toppled (3,215-2,723) in the ninth elimination round of the 2018 Philippine Bowling Associations in Kuwait General Members' Cup Team Tournament at the Kheifan's COZMO Bowling Center.

Aside from the dream wrecking event of the two cliff hanging teams there were no other changes in team standing inside and outside the elite group.

BOWLING

The high and mighty 'Super 6' members easily deposed their opponents by sweeping the three-games series except Nusantara. Other teams who registered victory were Haribon Slazers, COZMO Lane Masters, Kuwait National Exchange Co and Al Qassem All Stars.

The Swooping Eagles' celebration after retrieving its elite membership was momentary when they were toppled by an outsider team considered powerful but sluggish in the second and third quarter of the tournament. The Asian Air Safari was fifth rank on Week 3 but nosedived thereafter reaching tenth place on Week 6 and just recovered after three successive wins snatching the sixth position from the Swooping Eagles. The metal monster easily down the flying eagles in their three-game series



Al Qassem All Stars Team

1,028-930, 1,101-869, 1,061-924. With the victory the Asian Air registered back to back winning the Team Weekly High Series with 3,004 and 3,090 points. The classy bowlers of the Asian Air were Aseel Al Roumi 231, 235, 208 (674) and Salem Hajras 216, 226, 201 (643) Basil Al Enezi (566), Sandy Panopio (497) and Aqel Al Farisy (491) while the top scorer of the Eagles were Glen Corbitt (555) and come backer Angie Bush added 478 supported by Danny Solis (435), Jessica Balagat (424), Riz Roque (279) and Alonzo Bush (111).

Notwithstanding Al Qassem All Star Strikers standing as number one, they are playing in full force and embarrassed their rival the Original Pin Killers who showed up with just two coura-

geous bowlers. All time record of 858 points difference was registered against the two warring teams with scores of 3,108-2,250. All Stars' high scorer was superstar Fahad Rageed who scored 235, 200, 246 (681) also snatched the Class A Singles top pointers. He was assisted by Habeeb Redah (583), Hassan Al Qassem (513), Fadek Al Qassem (496) and Ali Jawli (482) while the fearless twosome of the Original Pin Killers were Rashid Aker Ali and Alma Turley who scored 500 points each.

The encounter between COZMO and "X" Strikers was considered a mismatched when the latter swept the three-game series 1,006-899, 1,020-805, 1,046-863 (3,097-2,567). With three consecutive losses in a row the



Asian Air Safari Team

chances of "X" Strikers of reclaiming their lost foothold became deem and

COZMO big pointers were Bader Malalah (593), Alex Cervantes (548), Ronnel Valencia (544) supported by Lito Michael (499) and Neng Cervantes (447) while "X" Men were Joe Presenta (542), Rocky Castil (441), Bima Nitikusumo (379), Reagan Percy (288) and Abel Nitikusumo (265). Haribon Slazers continued its sixth killing spree and the latest victim was the hapless Spongky Strikers 3,111-2,640.

NUSANTARA returned to its winning form against SKARZ 3,174-2,777. The latter outscored the Indonesian team in first game 1,013-944 but the braveheart NUSANTARA retaliated

and won the second and third game 1,028-891, 1,177-873 respectively.

The victorious team prized-catch bowler Ali Al Qassem delivered 197, 194, 248 (639) pinfalls and was supported by Saleh Al Faraj (571), Ahmad Fahmi (510), Gantosori Tanjung (505) Razak Abdullah (278) and Erlissa Gantosori (141) while SKARZ team have Stephen Sequera (340), Soloman Moraes (310), Diego Camilo (270), Fatima Fernandes (248), Ignatius Fernandes (229) and Aquello Fernandes (218).

Finally, the Haribon Slazers continued their killing spree for six consecutive weeks and the victims were the hapless Spongky Strikers 3,111-2,640. With blending scores were Moises Amahan (551), Mar Evangelista (534), (505) and Joel Tizon (496) while Spongky Strikers' were Mohammad Othman (493), Imelda Calingasan (478), Adolfo Prena (391), Rose Saliba (328) and Cathy Fernandes (296).

Despite having 4-man team the Kuwait National Exchange Co obliterated easily the winless Angelfire lady bowlers 2,862-2,467. KNEC's top performer was Ali Al Qattan who scored 191, 253, 217 (661) followed by Ibrahuim Dubayan (513), Abdullah Dubayan (512) and Neveen Wazel (482) while the fearless Angelfire lady bowlers were Eden Evangelista (417), Jocelyn Borros (410), Maryam Ali (329) and Isha Al Bakit (285).

Week\Team Weekly High Series\

1. Al Qassem All Stars — 3,001; 2. Al Qassem All Stars — 3,165; 3. KNEC Strikers — 3,214; 4. Al Qassem All Stars - 3,056; 5. Haribon Slazers - 3,022; 6. "X' Strikers - 2,960; 7. Al Qassem All Stars - 3,124; 8. Asian Aris Safari - 2,000 3,004; 9. Asian Air Safari — 3,090.

Ninth Round Standing: 1. Al Qassem All Stars (27,729); 2. KNEC Strikers (26,777.5); 3. Haribon Slazers (26,704); 4. COZMO Bowling Team (26,298);5. NUSANTARA (26,147.5);6. Asian Air Safari (25,935) 7. Swooping Eagles (25,557); 8. "X" Strikers (25,283.5); 9. Spongky Strikers (25,072.5); 10. Original Pin Killers (24,445.5); 11. SKARZ Team (24,150.5) and 12. Angelfire

NFL Roundup

TE Gronkowski limited in practice

Pats' Brady in serious mode as Super Bowl approaches

BLOOMINGTON, Minnesota, Feb 1, (RTRS): Four days before Super Bowl LII, Tom Brady faces a challenge that has nothing to do with the Philadelphia Eagles.

The five-time Super Bowl winner of the New England Patriots believes he has a math With the game in Minnesota - where

Brady's mom, Galynn, hails from and several other relatives reside — Brady received more gameday ticket requests than ever before.

"It's very special. Every time I've been back to Minnesota, I've had such great support from my family," Brady said. "In 2006

we played here in University of Minnesota stadium. It was much easier to get tickets for those previous two games. I'm trying to accommodate everybody. Being some of the great memories as a kid were coming here and hanging out, milking cows with my grandpa ... shooting his 22 in his backyard, catching sunfish with my uncle.



Brady said Wednesday at Mall of America during his media session after practice that he'll be dialed in when the ball is teed up this weekend. Last year in Houston, Brady said he participates in the meal the Patriots typically arrange for players and family but otherwise limits anything that could be perceived as a

That means any person or practice that wouldn't qualify as preparation for Super Bowl LII can wait until Sunday night.

"This isn't a week for me to go out and do much else other than football," Brady said, noting that he has changed the way he prepares in this his eighth Super Bowl appearance. "I definitely think it's different. Ît's improved. I'm more efficient. I know what I need to do to get myself mentally prepared. Now, I don't think there's any wasted moments in the day. Very focused - on the daily task. I spend a lot of time watching film. If it's physical, I know how to prepare myself."

Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski was limited in Wednesday's practice, the first onfield workout for New England since the team arrived in Minnesota on Monday.

Gronkowski said Tuesday he expects to play in Super Bowl LII on Sunday. He has not been officially cleared from concussion protocol, coach **Bill Belichick** said Wednesday.

Gronkowski is recovering from a concussion sustained in the AFC Championship Game in a high-speed collision with Jacksonville Jaguars safety Barry Church.

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell said during his State of the League address on Wednesday that the Patriots playing in a third Super Bowl in four years is not a bad thing for the league.

"It's really remarkable that they're going for their third Super Bowl in four years in this kind of a system, where keeping that group together, changing whatever they need to change — whether it's players or coaches - they do that in a way and still create success," he said. "I just marvel at that. I think our other clubs marvel at that. I think fans marvel at that. I think the balance of having new

teams with having teams that continue to find ways to win is a great thing for the NFL. And I think it's a great thing for our fans, so you can continue to win, and there are also teams that can surprise you. That's what makes our

New England practiced Wednesday for the

day. The Patriots are utilizing the Minnesota Vikings team headquarters in Eden Prairie, which is 15 minutes by bus from the Mall of America where both teams are staying this

Belichick noted the offensive line rarely gets attention unless things don't go well. Belichick credited longtime assistant coach Dante Scarnecchia with keeping the Patriots' offensive line off of his list of concerns. The Eagles thrive on pressure, with 17 different players accumulating at least 20 QB pressures this season.

"Dante just does a tremendous job in every aspect of the job. He's a great worker. First guy there every day, has been since I first started working with him in 1996," Belichick said of a coach in his 34th NFL season and 46th overall. "He does a great job with the young players coming into the league. He's certainly a very experienced coach who provides great leadership for younger coaches on the staff. I think we all gain motivation and learn from Dante's work and final product. Day after day, year after year, he's fantastic.'

Brady said the Patriots miss slot receiver Julian Edelman, but after going 2-2 to start the season he credits the offense with showing resiliency and finding a new engine to make things go.

"It's a very mentally tough team, very resilient team, very close team, which is always fun to be a part of," Brady said.

Patriots defensive coordinator Matt Patricia arrived at the media availability Wednesday wearing a camouflage hat with a skull and crossbones on it. He said it's a hat he wears regularly to pay homage to a friend who is in the military.

"Just always trying to honor those guys that go out and fight for us and protect us and keep us safe," he said.



New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady throws during a practice on Jan 31, 2018. (AP)

Caps' players end droughts in 5-3 victory over Flyers

Maple Leafs blank Islanders

WASHINGTON, Feb 1, (AP): Chandler Stephenson, Andre Burakovsky and T.J. Oshie ended lengthy goal droughts to help the Washington Capitals rally past the Philadelphia Flyers 5-3 on

Wednesday night.

Stephenson scored twice after going without a goal for 28 games. Burakovsky scored on the power play after coming up empty for 10 games, and Oshie lifted his arms and looked to the sky when he scored on the power play to end his 13-game dry

Devante Smith-Pelly scored Washington's fifth goal on 20 shots to chase Michal Neuvirth midway through the third period of a game the Capitals

trailed 2-0 after one.

No. 2 pick Nolan Patrick, Travis Konecny and Jakub Voracek scored for Philadelphia. Alex Lyon made his NHL debut in relief of Neuvirth, stopping five shots in preparation for what could be his first start Thursday at New Jersey.

Red Wings 2, Sharks 1, SO

In Detroit, Justin Abdelkader scored in the seventh round of a shootout, and Petr Mrazek stopped Tomas Hertl at the other end to give Detroit the win.

Trevor Daley scored for the Red Wings in the third period before Kevin Labanc responded for San Jose.

ICE HOCKEY

Gustav Nyquist, Andreas Athanasiou, Tomas Tatar and Abdelkader scored in the shootout for Detroit, while Joe Pavelski, Logan Couture and Chris Tierney scored for the Sharks.

The Red Wings had a season-high 44 shots, but San Jose salvaged a point thanks to goalie Martin Jones and Labanc's goal with 4:59 remain-

The Sharks spoiled Mrazek's bid for a third shutout in January after an extended period in Detroit's zone. Luke Glendening of the Red Wings was caught without a stick, and Labanc's wrist shot through traffic beat Mrazek high to the

glove side.

with 30 saves. Maple Leafs 5, Islanders 0 In Toronto, Justin Holl and Travis

Mrazek finished

Dermott each scored their first NHL goal, leading Toronto to the victory. Holl made his NHL debut after being recalled

Holl

from the minors earlier in the day. Kasperi Kapanen, Auston Matthews and Mitch Marner also scored for the Maple Leafs (29-18-5), and Frederik Andersen made 28 saves for his fourth shutout of the season.

Thomas Greiss stopped 45 shots for the Islanders (25-22-5), who also lost 4-1 at home against Florida on Tuesday.

Toronto had three rookie defensemen in the lineup after scratching regulars Morgan Rielly (upper body), Roman Polak (viral infection) and Ron Hainsey (illness).

NHL Results/Standings

Toronto		5	NY	' Islan	ders	0	Washington		5	. Ph	iladelı	ohia	3
Detroit		2	Sa	n Jos	e (SO)	1	3						
I	Eastern			е				Western			е		
	Atlant	ic Div						Centra	al Div	ision			
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	Pts		W	L	OTL	GF	GΑ	Pts
Tampa Bay	34	13	3	176	128	71	Winnipeg	30	13	8	167	137	68
Boston	29	11	8	157	119	66	Nashville	29	12	7	146	125	65
Toronto	29	18	5	167	146	63	St Louis	31	18	3	151	131	65
Detroit	20	21	8	128	147	48	Dallas	28	19	4	155	137	60
Florida	20	22	6	136	159	46	Minnesota	27	18	5	147	142	59
Montreal	20	24	6	130	159	46	Colorado	27	18	4	160	143	58
Ottawa	15 14	24 27	9	125	168	39 37	Chicago	24	19	7	148	137	55
Buffalo	etropo		9 Division	115	166	3/	ŭ	Pacific	c Div	ision			
IVI	W	ııtarı i	OTL	GF	GA	Pts		W	L	OTL	GF	GA	Pts
Washington	30	15	5	155	141	65	Las Vegas	33	12	4	168	130	70
Pittsburgh	28	21	3	156	155	59	San Jose	26	16	8	146	140	60
New Jersey	25	16	8	147	147	58	Los Angeles	27	18	5	142	121	59
Columbus	27	19	4	133	140	58	Anaheim	25	17	9	144	142	59
Philadelphia	24	18	8	144	146	56	Calgary	25	17	8	139	139	58
NY Rangers	25	20	5	153	151	55	Edmonton	22	24	3	135	157	47
NY Islanders	25	22	5	173	189	55	Vancouver	20	24	6	131	162	46
Carolina	23	19	8	139	155	54	Arizona	12	29	9	118	172	33

Nolan Patrick #19 of the Philadelphia Flyers skates past Dmitry Orlov #9 of the Washington Capi-

tals during the first period at Capital One Arena in Washington, DC. (AFP)

Red Sox' Betts awarded \$10.5m in arbitration

Ex-Yankees slugger Gamble dead

NEW YORK, Feb 1, (Agencies): Oscar Gamble, the left-handed power hitter famed in the 1970s for his outsized Afro hairstyle, died on Wednesday at the age of 68, his agent confirmed. Andrew Levy confirmed Gamble's death to

MLB.com, but did not indicate the cause. Gamble played seven of his 17 Major League seasons with the New York Yankees, in 1976 and

again from 1979-84. Boston Red Sox outfielder Mookie Betts won

\$10.5 million this season.

his arbitration case on Wednesday and will earn

deal for a first-year arbitration-eligible player that the Chicago Cubs gave third baseman Kris Bryant (\$10.85 million) this month, but the two sides settled to avoid an arbitration hearing.

Betts' requested salary is just short of the record

Alex Avila is OK with having to fight for his playing time as one of the Arizona Diamondbacks' catchers.

The 31-year-old free agent signed a two-year, \$8.25 million contract with Arizona on Wednesday, and he will join his fourth club in a span of

Clubs spend £430 million in window

Premier League smashes Jan transfer window record



Manchester City's Belgian midfielder Kevin De Bruyne (left), vies with West Bromwich Albion's English striker Jay Rodriguez during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and West Bromwich Albion at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England on Jan 31, 2018. (AFP)

Atletico lifted by Costa return

Barca resume Espanyol rivalry

BARCELONA, Feb 1, (RTRS): La Liga leaders Barcelona face what could be a fiery encounter against aggrieved neighbours Espanyol this weekend, while second-placed Atletico Madrid face a tricky game against Valencia.

Sunday's Catalonia derby is the third meeting in a little more than two weeks between Barca and their less glamorous opponents after a bitter two-legged Kings Cup quarter-final that escalated the ill feeling between the two Barcelona clubs

Espanyol beat their local rivals for the first time in nine years in first leg, but Barcelona advanced to the semifinals by winning the return leg 2-0, with post-match comments from Barca duo Sergio Busquets and Gerard Pique rubbing salt in the wounds.

Busquets criticised Espanyol for what he said were overzealcelebra-

tions after the

first leg, while

Pique mocked

Espanyol's city credentials by

calling them

its home mu-

referring

Cornella",



nicipality. The barbs prompted an official complaint from Espanyol, accusing the players of inciting vio-

The first leg at Espanyol's RCDE stadium had been played in a prickly atmosphere and Barca goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen was hit in the face by an object thrown by home supporters.

La Liga officials have described this Sunday's derby as a high-risk event, requiring increased policing, but Espanyol goalkeeper Diego Lopez called on his side's supporters to ensure there is a good-natured atmosphere and to resist any urges to abuse their opponents.

Barca hold an 11-point lead at the top of the standings, followed by an Atletico side that this Sunday host their main rivals as Spain's third force behind Barce-

Sociedad vs Deportivo belN SPORTS 3 HD

23:00 local Eibar vs Sevilla belN SPORTS 3 HD 15:00 local (Saturday) **Betis vs Villarreal beln SPORTS 3 HD**

18:15 local (Saturday) **Alaves vs Celta beln SPORTS 3 HD** 20:30 local (Saturday) Levante vs Real bein SPORTS 3 HD

22:45 local (Saturday) **Getafe vs Leganes belN SPORTS 3 HD** 14:00 local (Sunday) **Espanyol vs Barca belN SPORTS 3 HD**

18:15 local (Sunday) Girona vs Bilbao belN SPORTS 3 HD 20:30 local (Sunday) **Atletico vs Valencia belN SPORTS 3 HD**

22:45 local (Sunday) Palmas vs Malaga beiN SPORTS 3 HD 23:00 local (Monday)

lona and Real Madrid.

Sunday's opponents Valencia emerged as unlikely title contenders earlier in the season but are six points behind Atletico after losing five of their past eight

Atletico will be lifted by the return of Diego Costa after two weeks out through injury. They should also be better rested than Valencia, who visit the Spanish capital less than 72 hours after their Kings Cup semifinal first leg away to Barcelona.

LONDON, Feb 1, (AFP): Premier League clubs spent a record £430 million in the January transfer window as top sides scrambled to boost their squads in the race to secure lucrative Champions League spots, according to analysis by

The sum spent was nearly double the previous record of £225 million, with deadline day alone, Jan 31, seeing clubs complete deals totalling £150 million (\$214 million, 172 million euros), also a new record for the winter window.

Deloitte's Sports Business Group estimates spending by Premier League clubs in the 2017/18 season to be a record £1.9 billion, eclipsing last season's record of £1.4 billion. "Premier League clubs have taken

the opportunity to refresh their squads in January before the decisive phase of the season," said Dan Jones, a partner in the accountancy firm.

Nearly two-thirds of the gross expenditure was by the top six, while the bottom six accounted for about a

The winter transfer window usually sees the bulk of spending by clubs at the bottom of the league as they attempt to spend their way to survival from relegation, although

last month's splurge is more like a normal summer window. "Such is the level of competition for a coveted top-four position in the Premier League, as well as ongoing European battles, that top clubs have been willing to break with more traditional summer investment strategies to steal a march on



their rivals mid-season, with several club transfer records being broken in this window," said Jones.

He added that international trade had flourished, with the highest-ever January gross overseas outlay in Premier League history (£260 million), but also the highest amount of January receipts from abroad (£185 million), with names such as Philippe Coutinho and Diego Costa leaving England and (Aymeric) Laporte and (Pierre-Emerick) Aubameyang

Brazil midfielder Coutinho moved from Liverpool to Barcelona after five seasons at Anfield, while Chelsea's wantaway Spanish striker Diego Costa left for Atletico Madrid.

West Ham suspend Henry

LONDON, Feb 1, (RTRS): The Football Association said it is investigating West Ham United's director of player recruitment Tony Henry after the Premier League club suspended him on Thursday following claims of racial discrimination.

According to a report in the Daily Mail, Henry said the club wanted to limit the number of African players in their squad as "they have a bad attitude" and "cause mayhem" when they are not in the team.

The FA confirmed it was formally investigating the matter, while West Ham said Henry has been suspended pending "full and thorough investigation".

'West Ham United will not tolerate any type of discrimination and has, therefore, acted swiftly due to the serious nature of these claims," the club said

"The West Ham United family is an inclusive one where, regardless of gender, age, ability, race, religion or sexual orientation, everybody feels welcome

"The club will make no further comment until the investigation has been concluded.'

Henry joined West Ham in 2014, having previously worked for Everton, Sunderland and Chelsea. West Ham have six first-team squad members of African descent - Cheikhou Kouyate, Pedro Obiang, Joao Mario, Angelo Ogbonna, Arthur Masuaku and Edimilson Fernandes.

Kouyate posted a message on Instagram on Thursday, saying: "African and proud".

Manchester City spent £57 million on Athletic Bilbao defender Aymeric Laporte and Aubameyang signed for Arsenal for £56 million.

Liverpool got in early to line up the costliest deal of the month, signing Virgil van Dijk from Southampton for £75m. One of the most high-profile transfers, Alexis Sanchez to Manchester United, was a straight swap deal, with Henrikh Mkhitaryan going in the opposite direction.

A new January transfer window record for player sales was also set, with deals totalling £340 million, leaving net transfer expenditure at £90 million.

Pep repeats call, City forge ahead

Conte in trouble

MANCHESTER, United Kingdom, Feb 1, (AFP): Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola urged officials to better protect his star players after a 3-0 victory over West Bromwich Albion.

The result left his side with a commanding 15-point lead at the top of the Premier League but Guardiola was unhappy with a series of challenges, the worst of which saw Matt Phillips booked for a high-flying lunge at young City substitute Brahim Diaz.

The incident followed City's FA Cup victory at Cardiff on Sunday

ırnlev vs City beln SPORTS 2 HD. 11 HD 15:30 local (Saturday) Leicester vs Swansea belN SPORTS 1 HD 18:00 local (Saturday) United vs Huddersfield belN SPORTS 2

HD, 11 HD 18:00 local (Saturday) **Bournemouth vs Stoke belN SPORTS 4 HD** 18:00 local (Saturday)

Brighton vs West Ham beln SPORTS 7 HD 18:00 local (Saturday) Arsenal vs Everton beln SPORTS 2 HD, 11 HD

20:30 local (Saturday) Palace vs Newcastle beln SPORTS 2 HD, 17:15 local (Sunday)

Liverpool vs Spurs beln SPORTS 2 HD, 11 HD 19:30 local (Sunday) Watford vs Chelsea beln SPORTS 2 HD, 11 HD 23:00 local (Monday)

where Leroy Sane suffered an ankle ligament injury which will sideline him for up to seven weeks — prompting Guardiola's call for his players protection.

However, he was in a more conciliatory mood on Wednesday, although he did have an animated discussion with fourth official Kevin Friend on the final whistle.

"I've said what I said so we spoke with Kevin, the fourth official," Guardiola told reporters. "They have an

'United top club

online in China'

SHANGHAI, Feb 1, (AFP): Man-

chester United have held onto their

position as the top football club

online in China, with Barcelona

star Lionel Messi the number one

by Shanghai-based sports digital

consultancy Mailman found Jose

Mourinho's side are the best-per-

forming club for the second year

in a row despite their lack of recent

European champions Real Madrid

and Germany's Bayern Munich.

United are followed in the list by

Anthony Martial is the third

most popular player in China,

behind only Messi and Real Ma-

drid's Cristiano Ronaldo, with

United midfielder Paul Pogba and

former captain Wayne Rooney

different performance indicators,

places the Bundesliga ahead of the

Premier League as the number one

European football league online.

The report, which used eight

Premier League success.

completing the top five.

The annual Red Card report

player, a report said.

Chelsea's Spanish defender Marcos Alonso (left), vies with Bournemouth's Scottish midfielder Ryan Fraser during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Bournemouth at Stamford Bridge in London on Jan 31, 2018. (AFP) opinion, I have another one, they're the

bosses, I accept that. I have to accept it."
The Spaniard added: "Today we were lucky, three or four days ago we were unlucky with Leroy. "The image speaks for itself. I could

repeat what I said after the last game but it's not necessary. The chat was good, that's all." Guardiola was also unhappy with a late lunge by James McClean on Kevin

De Bruyne, which earned the West Brom man a yellow card, and an Allan Nyom foul on Kyle Walker. But Albion manager Alan Pardew be-

lieved Guardiola's weekend comments had provoked City supporters into trying to put pressure on referee Bobby Madley in a bid to get him to hand out harsher treatment to the visitors than might otherwise have been the case.

Pardew also pointed out that City were not faultless, highlighting an early incident in which home midfielder Fernandinho appeared to stamp on Grzegorz Krychowiak, who had to be replaced later in the first half.

"He's a winger and in desperate situations wingers can make poor challenges. It was a poor challenge, make no mistake about that," said Pardew of Phillips's challenge.

Officiating aside, it was a routine victory for Guardiola's team, with goals from Fernandinho, De Bruyne and Sergio Aguero sealing victory.

Meanwhile, Antonio Conte had no doubt the pressure on his position would intensify after his Chelsea side's stunning 3-0 defeat by Bournemouth at Stamford Bridge.

The Blues head coach insists his Chelsea team, the reigning Premier League champions, are over-achieving this season - but claims he is "relaxed" if members of the club's hierarchy view things differently.

Defeat left Chelsea in fourth place in the Premier League, just two points above Tottenham Hotspur and Conte accepted there were concerns over whether the Blues would qualify for next season's Champions League.

"The pressure, it's normal. It's normal for a coach, for a manager," Conte said. "It's normal if you are Chelsea's

"After the first game this season, you (the media) tried to put pressure on my job. But I'm trying to do my best."

The Italian added: "If someone doesn't think this club deserves this table (position) or deserve this situation. I repeat: we are doing everything, we are doing 120 percent. I'm exploiting this squad at the maximum level. "But, if someone doesn't agree about

this, I'm here. I have to accept every situation. I'm very relaxed about this. I know that I'm doing a great job, a great work, me and the staff and the players.'

There have been reports that Conte has angered Chelsea's Russian billionaire owner Roman Abramovich with thinly veiled criticism of the London club's transfer policy.

'I always want to win'

Milan show signs of revival under Gattuso

MILAN, Feb 1, (RTRS): It is not always pretty to watch, and few expected it would be, but AC Milan are showing signs of a revival under their fiery former midfielder Gennaro Gat-

A 0-0 draw against Lazio on Wednesday in the Coppa Italia, which followed a 2-1 league win over the same opponents three days earlier, extended their unbeaten run to six games in all competitions, reversing an alarming pre-Christmas slump.

After Sunday's win over Lazio, Gattuso allowed his players to slap him on the head in the middle of the pitch in an unorthodox celebration.

"I just want to make my squad happy, especially the players who are angry with me because they are on the bench," he said.

Gattuso had not coached a Serie A team before he was rushed into the job in November after Vincenzo Montella was sacked. But he has clearly succeeded in transmitting the



Lazio's Brazilian defender Luiz Felipe Ramos (left), vies with AC Milan's Croatian forward Nikola Kalinic during the Italian Serie A football match AC Milan vs Lazio at the San Siro Stadium in Milan on Jan 31, 2018. (AFP)

fighting spirit he was renowned for as

"Perhaps I am the worst coach in Se-

rie A, but I always want to win, even playing in the garden with my son," he said after a Coppa Italia win over

Sampdoria vs Torino belN SPORTS 4 HD 20:00 local (Saturday) Inter vs Crotone belN SPORTS 4 HD 22:45 local (Saturday) Hellas vs Roma beln SPORTS 4 HD 14:30 local (Sunday) **Bologna vs Fiorentina belN SPORTS 1 HD**

17:00 local (Sunday) Juve vs Sassuolo belN SPORTS 4 HD 17:00 local (Sunday) **Udinese vs Milan belN SPORTS 7 HD**

17:00 local (Sunday) Benevento vs Napoli belN SPORTS 4 HD 22:45 local (Sunday)

Lazio vs Genoa belN SPORTS 4 HD 22:45 local (Monday)

neighbours Inter in December.

Gattuso spent 12 seasons playing for Milan, winning two Serie A titles, two Champions Leagues and one Club World Cup, and was known as one of Italy's toughest players.

WADA confirms flaw in sample bottles

The World Anti-Doping Agency said Wednesday it had confirmed that new generation drug-testing kits could be susceptible to tampering and recommended use of an older model at the Pyeo-

ngchang Winter Olympics. 'It has been confirmed that a proportion of the new generation BE-REG-KIT Geneva security bottles are susceptible to manual opening without evidence of tampering, whether they have been frozen or not," WADA said in a statement. With the Winter Games due to

open on Feb 9, the International Olympic Committee had asked the agency to look into the matter after a laboratory in Cologne reported the newer bottles could be opened after being

> The glass containers had been touted as the next generation of sample bot-tles since being released last year, part of the ongoing effort to avoid a repeat of the Russian doping scandal that dogged the 2014 Winter Olympics and still reverberates today. (AFP)

The North Korean flag (left center), flies amongst flags from many nations as they fly at the Olympic Village at the 2018 Winter Olympics in Gangneung, South Korea on Feb 1. (AP)





Chinese need luck to avoid going home empty-handed

China warn of real difficulties at Pyeongchang Olympics

SHANGHAI, Feb 1, (AFP): China are striking a bleak tone for the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics and warning they will need luck if they are to avoid going home empty-handed four years before they host the Games for the first time.

Nobody is saying that China have given up on medal success from Feb 9-25, but high-level sports officials seem to see it as a stepping stone to Beijing 2022, when abject failure is unthinkable.

China unveiled their Olympic squad on Wednesday and will take 82 athletes to South Korea, an increase on the 66 that travelled to Sochi four years ago.

But Sun Yuanfu, a senior winter sports official, warned that public expectations should be low and said that Chinese winter sports suffered from "a poor foundation'

"If we are lucky, we can get some gold medals. If not, we may get none," Sun told the state Xinhua news agency in unusually downbeat terms.

"We have to work for the best and be prepared for real difficulties."

China have come a long way in the Summer Olympics, topping the medals table at the Beijing 2008 Games and coming second at London 2012 and third at Rio 2016.

With rising incomes and the growth

of the middle class in China, coupled with an aggressive push by the government, winter sports are booming too.

But that is yet to translate into Winter Games success and at Sochi 2014,

improving slowly in some other disciplines, "there is no essential breakthrough in general and Chinese participation still relies on the sports it is

ing, figure skating and freestyle skiing,

"As the hosts of the next Winter

Olympics, the performance of the Chinese delegation at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics should follow un upward trend," he cautioned.

"But so far the trend is not obvious, indicating a poor foundation in our winter sports.

That is not to say China are surren-

3,000m and men's 5,000m relays in short-track, and four-time world champion Wu Dajing is relishing getting one over the South Koreans in front of their home crowd.

wanted as it represents the collective

strength of our country in this sport,"

China also have hopes for medals in men's and women's aerials - the freestyle skiing discipline — and in figure skating, where reigning pairs world champions Sui Wenjing and Han Cong are strong favourites for gold in their Olympic debut.

The duo have already tasted success at Gangneung — the venue that will be used for the Olympics — taking gold at the Four Continents Championships China and Han will be hoping that Sui, who missed much of 2016 injured, can stay healthy.

There are also expectations for China in snowboarding, in the form of Liu

Games coming into view.

For example, at Pyeongchang, Chang Xinyue will become China's first female Olympic ski jumper.

Women's ski jumping only arrived at the Olympics for the first time at

'Magic ingredient'

Geisenberger & Loch seek another Oly win

BERLIN, Feb 1, (AP): There has never been a women's luge athlete who has won more World Cup medals than Natalie Geisenberger. Same goes for world championship medals, same goes for Olympic medals.

Her resume is beyond compare. So she's the best ever to slide, right? "No," she says, adamantly. "I'm not the best."

She may not think so, but plenty of people in the luge world think otherwise. There may no other athlete at the Pyeongchang Ólympics — not Lindsey Vonn, not Mikaela Shiffrin, not Nathan Chen — more expected to win than Geisenberger, the star attraction of a juggernaut German luge program that has been miles ahead of the rest of the world for generations.

"I'm not one who looks to the number of races or being on the podium,' Geisenberger said.

Maybe she should. Here's a baffling comparison: The United States, in its entire World Cup luge history, has 45 gold medals. Geisenberger has 43 golds in singles races alone, 64 when adding her appearances in relay events and 117 total medals just from World Cup events.

She has 12 world championship medals and three Olympic medals, both tying for the best ever. In Germany, she is considered an absolute sporting superstar — whether she wants the spotlight or not.

"The motivation is that I like what I do, I love what I do," Geisenberger said. "I like the sport. I love to race against other people, to fight against myself and I like to be successful. I know the feeling to stand on the podium, on the top. I know the feeling when the national anthem is playing. I'm addicted to that feeling.

Germans don't win every race. It just

seems that way. Geisenberger is the defending Olympic champion who won 13 medals in 13 races in World Cup singles competition this season. Two-time defending men's Olympic champion Felix Loch led all men with eight singles medals. The doubles team of Toni Eggert and Sascha Benecken medaled in 12 of 13 events, winning gold in 10 of them.

Add up all the World Cup races from this winter, and the rest of the world won 17. Germany won 28.

"I don't know what the magic ingredient is," said US women's luge veteran Erin Hamlin, a two-time world champion and the 2014 Olympic women's bronze medalist. "They're competitors. They come out on race day and you can pretty much bet they're going to go faster than they did all week in training. Happens all the time. They're breaking track records almost every week.

Also:

SEOUL: North Korea's national flag was raised in the South Thursday for the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, organisers said, after an exemption came into force to avoid breaching Seoul's tough national security law.

The two Koreas are still technically at war as the 1950-53 Korean conflict ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty. Under the security legislation,

praise for the North is illegal, punishable by up to seven years in prison, and displaying the country's red, white and blue flag is considered a violation.

But in order to comply with International Olympic Committee protocol that all competing countries' emblems are displayed, prosecutors have granted an exemption for Games venues, including award ceremony locations and official athlete accommodation.



In this Feb 8, 2014 file photo, Felix Loch of Germany, starts his run during the men's singles luge competition at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Kras naya Polyana, Russia. (AP)

List of Russian Athletes Cleared

LAUSANNE, Feb 1, (RTRS): Twenty-eight Russian athletes have had their Olympic doping bans overturned and their results from the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi reinstated after their appeals were upheld by the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

They were cleared of any antidoping rule violation at the Games four years ago and had lifetime Olympic bans overturned.

1. Dmitry Trunenkov (bobsleigh); 2. Aleksei Negodailo (bobsleigh); 3. Olga Stulneva (bobsleigh); 4. Liudmila Udobkina (bobsleigh); 5. Aleksander Tretiakov (skeleton); 6. Sergei Chudinov (skeleton); 7. Elena Nikitina (skeleton); 8. Olga Potylitsyna (skeleton); 9. Maria Orlova (skeleton); 10. Alexander Legkov (cross-country skiing);

11. Evgeniy Belov (cross-country skiing); 12. Maxim Vylegzhanin (cross-country skiing); 13. Alexey Petukhov (cross-country skiing); 14. Nikita Kryukov (crosscountry skiing); 15. Alexander Bessmertnykh (cross-country skiing); 16. Evgenia Shapovalova (cross-country skiing); 17. Natalia Matveeva (cross-country skiing); 18. Olga Fatkulina (speed skating); 19. Alexander Rumyantsev (speed skating); 20. Ivan Skobrev (speed skating); 21. Artem Kuznetcov (speed skating); 22. Tatyana Ivanova (luge); 23. Albert Demchenko (luge); 24. Ekaterina Lebedeva (ice hockey); 25. Ekaterina Pashkevich (ice hockey); 26. Tatiana Burina (ice hockey); 27. Anna Shchukina (ice hockey); 28. Ekaterina Smolentseva (ice hockey)

China won just three golds, all in speed Sun warned that while China was

traditionally good at". That means short-track speed skat-

dering all hope in Pyeongchang. They are homing in on the women's

"The team-event gold is our most

said Wu, a 500m silver medallist at Sochi 2014.

"To win it over the hosts in their house would be really satisfying," he said.

last year.

Jiayu and Zhang Yiwei.

China has enlarged its squad for South Korea in an attempt to become competitive in a broader range of disciplines, again with the 2022 Beijing



Olympic confusion, CAS lifts 'doping bans' on 28 Russians

Russia reclaims nine medals; two gold after the ruling

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea, Feb 1, (AFP): Sport's top court CAS on Thursday overturned Olympic life bans on 28 Russians accused of doping, a decision hailed by Moscow but a major embarrassment for the International Olympic Committee just days away from the start of the Winter Games in Pyeongchang.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport ruled that the there was "insufficient" evidence that the athletes had benefited from a system of statesponsored doping at the 2014 Winter Games, hosted by Russia.

The cleared 28, which includes Sochi cross-country gold medallist Alexander Legkov, are now eligible to compete in the Pyeongchang Olympics starting next week, but their participation is by no means "Not being sanctioned does not automatically con-

fer the privilege of an invitation" to the 2018 Games in South Korea, the IOC explained in a statement. Russia are banned from Pyeongchang over the doping scandal but 169 Russian competitors have

been cleared to take part as neutrals. The IOC warned that CAS's verdict "may have a serious impact on the future fight against doping".

Therefore, the IOC will analyse the reasoned decisions very carefully once they are available and consider consequences, including an appeal to the Swiss Federal Tribunal." The exonerated group were among 42 Russians

bobsleighers, cross-country skiers, competitors in the skeleton and ice hockey players — to appeal In addition to clearing the 28, CAS also lifted the

life bans of another 11 Russians but barred them from competing at Pyeongchang. Delivering its judgement CAS said: "In 28 cases, the evidence collected was found to be insufficient to establish that an anti-doping rule violation was com-

mitted by the athletes concerned. "The evidence put forward by the IOC in relation to this matter did not have the same weight in each CAS's decision was warmly welcomed by Russian

"We are very glad for our athletes," Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. "The information about the decision of the Court of Arbitration for Sport proves that energetic work to

President Vladimir Putin.

SA send lone participant to Winter Oly

CAPE TOWN, Feb 1, (RTRS): South Africa named Alpine skier Connor Wilson as the only athlete to travel to this month's Winter Olympics in Pyeo-

It means no place on the slopes for Sive Speelman, who had hoped to become the first black skier from the country to take part in the Olympics.

The country has been allocated one entry into the Alpine skiing competition by the International Olympic Committee and as both Speelman and Wilson qualified, the latter was chosen due to his higher International Ski Federation (FIS) rankings. Wilson, 21, was ranked 54th in the giant slalom

stand up for our rights in court and elsewhere — it is justified, it can be effective and it should continue,"

"And we are hoping that this work will certainly He said it was unclear whether the 28 who had their

appeals upheld would now compete in South Korea. 'It is a difficult question," the Kremlin spokesman added, noting Russian officials would continue talking to the IOC.

Last week's mass CAS hearings were as a result of allegations of a vast state-sponsored doping programme contained in the report into Sochi authored by sports law professor Richard McLaren for the

World Anti-Doping Agency.
His explosive findings laid out the workings of the programme — from the use of secret state agents to passing urine samples out of testing labs through



In this Dec 15, 2017 file photo, Russia's winner Elena Nikitina celebrates after the women's Skeleton World Cup race in Innsbruck, Austria. (AP)

and 71st in the slalom event at the end of 2017. Speelman also missed out on competing at the 2014 Sochi Games despite qualifying as the country's Olympic committee declined to send a team.

However, he has been selected to act as a "technical official" to the team in Pyeongchang, a statement from the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) said.

Snow Sports South Africa has been trying to grow its footprint among the mainstream sports in the country and last year held Alpine ski events on the FIS tour that attracted over 80 international competitors from 18 different countries.

But for Russian deputy prime minister Vitaly Mutko, CAS's ruling proved Moscow never orchestrated a state-sponsored doping programme.

"One can say that there wasn't any system or any sort of manipulation at the Sochi Olympic Games, we've always said that but today the Court of Arbitration for Sport issued such a ruling," said Mutko, who himself is appealing to CAS over his life ban.

He was banned after being singled out in McLar-With Legkov and the other 27 having their Sochi

results reinstated Russia roared back to the top of the medals table. The Russian team initially won 33 medals in Sochi, including 13 golds, to put it ahead of Norway

and Canada but they slipped to fourth after the IOCimposed sanctions. They reclaimed two golds, six silvers and a bronze, putting it back, in theory, on top of the 2014 medals tree. CAS's verdict drew a whithering response from

Jim Walden, the lawyer of doping whistleblower Grigory Rodchenkov. Rodchenkov, the former head of Moscow's antidoping laboratory, is the source of revelations on

Moscow's state-sponsored doping. Walden told AFP the ruling was "unfortunate" and suggested it "provides a very small measure of pun-

ishment for some athletes but a complete 'get out of jail free card' for most" He added: "The CAS decision only emboldens cheaters, makes it harder for clean athletes to win, and provides yet another ill-gotten gain for the corrupt Russian

doping system generally, and Putin specifically. And the head of the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DSOB) Alfons Hoermann described the CAS verdict as a "slap in the face of clean sports".

Virginia continues winning streak

Iowa State rolls past short-handed West Virginia

AMES, Iowa, Feb 1, (AP): Donovan Jackson scored 25 points, Lindell Wigginton added 22 and Iowa State upset 15thranked West Virginia 93-77 on Wednesday night, sending the short-handed Mountaineers to their fifth loss in six

Cameron Lard scored 18 points with 13 rebounds for the Cyclones (12-9, 3-6 Big 12). They took advantage of the absence of West Virginia's Daxter Miles Jr. (illness) by handing the Mountaineers (16-6, 5-4) their biggest defeat since a 23-point blowout at the hands of Texas AM in the

The Cyclones had West Virginia play-

BASKETBALL

ing catch-up from the opening tip. The Mountaineers caught them just once — but were never able to overtake

West Virginia fell behind 25-11 after allowing Iowa State to hit 10 of its first 13 shots. The Mountaineers rallied with an 18-4 run, but the Cyclones answered with a 24-11 spurt and went back ahead 53-40.

Iowa State continued its torrid shooting in the second half. Jackson's fifth 3 gave it a 74-60 lead, and Wigginton's drive at the end of the shot clock made it 84-70 with

The Cyclones committed just eight turnovers against the league's leader in turnover margin despite missing point guard Nick Weiler-Babb to knee tendini-

Jevon Carter scored 18 points and Esa Ahmad and Sagaba Konate each had 17 for West Virginia.

The Mountaineers aren't exactly in a tailspin, considering its previous four losses came against No. 10 Texas Tech, No. 7 Kansas, TCU and No. 21 Kentucky. But the fact that the Cyclones had no problem breaking their vaunted press without Weiler-Babb in the lineup is a bad sign heading into February. West Virginia clearly missed Miles, who is second on the



Jevon Carter #2 of the West Virginia Mountaineers takes a shot as Cameron Lard #2 of the Iowa State Cyclones blocks in the second half of play at Hilton Coliseum on Jan 31, 2018 in Ames, Iowa. (AFP)

team with 12.8 points a game. Coach Steve Prohm had to be encouraged by his team's effort after a 68-45 home loss to Tennessee that left he and his players calling the Cyclones "soft" more than once. Iowa State showed resolve against a team that had won four of the previous five meetings in the series.

Virginia 74, Louisville 64 In Charlottesville, Va, Kyle Guy scored 22 points and No. 2 Virginia held off hotshooting Louisville to win its 13th straight,

Ty Jerome added 16 points and Devon Hall 12 for the Cavaliers (21-1, 10-0 Atlan-tic Coast Conference). Virginia's start is its best in ACC play since the 1980-81 team won its first 12 games. The winning streak is its longest since winning 19 in a row to begin the 2014-15 season.

Ray Spalding scored 16 points and Deng Adel had 15 points for the Cardinals (16-6, 6-3). Louisville made nine of 10 shots at one point down the stretch, closing to within 62-57 on a long 3-pointer by

Cameron Lard #2 of the Iowa State Cyclones battles with Esa Ahmad #23 of the West Virginia Mountaineers for the ball in the second half of play at Hilton Coliseum on Jan 31, 2018 in Ames, Iowa. The Iowa State Cyclones

won 93-77 over the West Virginia Mountaineers. (AFP)

WC organizers dismiss threat:

izing committee has dismissed claims

that a plague of locusts could threaten

ministry that locusts could devour the

grass at stadiums in southern Russian

Sorokin says "locusts present no

danger to soccer fields" because "the

it's sprayed with certain substances."

Sorokin says "we try to look at this with humor, can't say anything else.

Scottish FA chief executive:

Scottish Football Association (SFA)

It's not a threat." (AP)

grass on soccer fields is very short and

The head of the World Cup organ-

the soccer tournament in Russia.

to a warning from the agriculture

Alexei Sorokin was responding

BERLIN, Feb 1, (RTRS): Borussia Dortmund have a proven track record in recent seasons of replacing a de-parting top striker with an equally efficient forward and the Ruhr valley club

is hoping to continue this run with the arrival of Michy Batshuayi. The Belgian joined until the end of the season on a loan deal from Chelsea in order to fill the gap left by the transfer of Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, last season's Bundesliga top scorer, to Arsenal and the Premier League on Wednesday.

Replacing the Gabon international is no small feat with Abameyang having scored 98 goals in 144 Bundesliga matches for Dortmund.

He also grabbed 15 goals in 32

Champions League matches for them as well as another 15 in 15 German Cup games for a stellar scoring record during his four-and-a-half years in Germany.
Until his disciplinary offences in the

past weeks where he missed a meet-

Ryan McMahon with 3:44 left, but Jerome answered with back-to-back 3s for the

The victory gave Virginia a three-game lead in the conference.

The Cardinals continue to have trouble with Virginia's Pack-Line defense, even while shooting 50 percent (25-50). They committed 13 turnovers and were outscored 22-6 off those mistakes. The loss was also the fifth straight for Louisville against Virginia, and sixth in seven games since the Cardinals joined the ACC.

A three-game suspension for reserve guard Nigel Johnson provided a rare opportunity for freshman Marco Anthony and he made the most of it, hitting a pair of 3-pointers and scoring 10 points in 18 minutes. It was only the fourth ACC game

ing or "was not focused enough" that angered Dortmund fans as he essentially forced his transfer, he was a crowd favourite with a lethal finish 13 league goals to his name

Three years earlier Lewandowski joined Dortmund as an understudy to then Dortmund top scorer Lucas Bar-

that Anthony has gotten into and his point "I thought we played well on offense," Miller said. "We played with less than 10

on Dec 19. Arizona 100, Washington State 72

with his team's sterling offensive effort in a blowout win at Washington State.

game in beating Washington State 100-72 on Wednesday night.

first place in the Pac-12. "I think Deandre and Allonzo comBundesliga top scorer Lewandowski carved out a name as one of Europe's most efficient forwards.

Belgium international Batshuayi

Bayern look unstoppable

Dortmund hope Batshuayi arrival comes with bag of goals

has yet to earn any of Lewandowski's or Aubameyang's honours, having made 53 appearances for Chelsea in all competitions since joining from Olympique Marseille in July 2016 and scoring 19 goals.

But after failing to convince Chelsea coach Antonio Conte of a regular starting spot, the 24-year-old, who represented his country at Euro 2016, now hopes first-team action will help his chances of featuring more prominently at this year's World Cup in Russia.

With just two victories from their last 13 league games and none in their last three, Dortmund are desperate for Batshuayi's goals with Dortmund having dropped to sixth and travelling to

bottom side Cologne on Friday.

Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich look unstoppable as they chase a record-extending sixth consecutiv

turnovers, did a really good job on the of-

Rawle Alkins scored 16 points for Ari-

zona (19-4, 9-1 Pac-12), which has won

seven games in a row. The Wildcats have

Robert Franks scored 25 points for

Washington State (9-12, 1-8), which has

dropped 13 in a row to Arizona. It was the

and was only up that high because of a late

Washington State shot just 41 percent,

Ayton, a 7-foot freshman from the Ba-

Cougars' first home game since Jan 13.

lost just one time since Nov 24.

Actually, they were 19 for 21.

Cologne vs Dortmund beIN SPORTS

22:30 local

Mainz vs Bayern belN SPORTS 5 HD 17:30 local (Saturday) M'gladbach vs Leipzig belN SPORTS

20:30 local (Saturday) Augsburg vs Frankfurt bein SPORTS

17:30 local (Sunday)

Hamburg vs Hannover belN SPORTS

20:00 local (Sunday)

Bundesliga crown. They have opened up as massive 16-point lead at the top and take on lowly Mainz 05 on Saturday, with second-placed Bayer Leverkusen, on 34

points, travelling to Freiburg. paint. "They had a little match-up zone going and I wasn't on the perimeter a lot," Ay-

ton said. "I could just cross the glass pretty

easy on the offensive end to get offensive

boards and put it back up." "He gave us problems all over the floor," Franks said of Ayton. "He's strong. He can move very well."

This one was over early.

With the score tied at 20, Arizona went on a 25-5 run over the next seven minutes to build a 45-25 lead. Alkins hit three consecutive 3-pointers during that run, while the Cougars made just two of 14 field goals during one stretch.

"Those three 3s (by Alkins) really burst the game open in the second half," Washington State coach Ernie Kent said. "His 3s really hurt us."



It was only after the Paraguay international's departure that the two-time

total doubled his career high. He scored five against Savannah State

In Pullman, Sean Miller was pleased

The ninth-ranked Wildcats shot 67 percent in the first half and 61 percent for the

Deandre Ayton scored 25 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, and Allonzo Trier added 24 points as Arizona remained in

bined for 19 for 22 from the field," Miller

Arizona outscore the Cougars 52-22 in the Horsey trails by one stroke

hamas, made 11 of 12 shots and helped

Paisley takes early lead in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 1, (AFP): England's Chris Paisley took a one-stroke clubhouse lead in the first round of the Maybank Championship in Malaysia on Thursday as top players fell off the The world number 80 posted a bo-

gey-free round of 65, gaining a slim advantage over compatriot David Horsey as Sweden's Henrik Stenson and China's Li Haotong failed to set the tempo in stop-start conditions. "It was great and nice to keep the

who is chasing a second European Tour title this year, said at an aftergame press conference. "I just played really solid, hit it well off the tee so gave myself a lot of wedges and short irons into the greens

form going," the 31-year-old Paisley,

self a lot of birdie chances. Couldn't have gone better." Stenson, ranked 12th worldwide, only managed an even par-72 after four

which were really good and gave my-

GOLF

bogeys to finish tied-95th.

Li, 22, China's first men's golfer to break into the world top 50 last week, ended the day tied-133rd.

Rainy afternoon weather saw play halted for close to two hours, as the 156-strong field failed to gather momentum at the Saujana Golf and Coun-

Other top finishers included India's Arjun Atwal, Asia's captain at the Eur-Asia Cup who finished tied-fourth at five-under par 67.

Thomas Bjorn, who led Europe to the EurAsia Cup title, meanwhile finished tied-10th after posting a 68. Another 40 golfers will tee off early

Friday morning to finish the first round, before the second round kicks off with more wet weather forecast. Hopes are high for Li to do well after he triumphed over four-time Major

winner Irishman Rory McIlroy at the Dubai Desert Classic last week to surge to 32 on the world rankings. Defending champion Zanotti also lurked within contention

after the Paraguayan finished the day tied-10 with a 68. Leading scores after the first round of the Maybank Championship Malay-

sia (par 72):

65 — Chris Paisley (ENG) 66 — David Horsey (ENG)

67 — Andrew Johnston (ENG), David Lipsky (USA), Arjun Atwal (IND),



Li Haotong of China tees off on the first hole during the first round of the 2018 Maybank Malaysia Golf Championship at Saujana Golf and Country Club outside Kuala Lumpur on Feb 1. (AFP)

NBA saddened by Butler death

MIAMI, Feb 1, (AP): The first time Dwyane Wade was supposed to make a public appearance on behalf of the Miami Heat back in 2003, he found himself paralyzed

by nervousness.
So Rasual Butler jumped into action, joining his teammate for the event solely to keep him calm. "That's who he was," Wade said. "A great individual that was

always there for people when they needed him."

Tributes like that were offered

all over the basketball landscape in honor of Butler, a longtime NBA player who died Wednesday in what police said was a single vehicle rollover crash in Los Angeles. Police said Butler and his wife, R&B singer and former "American Idol" contestant Leah LaBelle Vladowski, died at the scene and that autopsies were

pending.

Butler was 38. The NBA released a statement saying it was "devastated" by Butler's death.

"A pro's pro, Rasual enjoyed a

long, successful career and was widely respected by his peers and coaches," the NBA said.

Romain Wattel (FRA), Lee Soo-Min

son (ENG), Gaganjeet Bhullar (IND),

Robert Karlsson (SWE), Thomas

Detry (BEL), Scott Jamieson (SCO),

68 - Ryan Fox (NZL), Chris Han-

That's perhaps an understate-Butler never played in the NBA

Finals. He was never selected for an All-Star Game. More often than not, when he played, he finished the night with fewer than 10 points.
That didn't matter. Teams often clamored to have him on their ros-

ter - a testament to the type of

person he was. "Rasual was the consummate team player and a great role model for our younger players on how a professional should prepare and act, while being a positive influence on everyone who associated with him," said Kevin Pritchard, Indiana's president of basketball operations.

Butler was the 53rd player out of 57 taken in the 2002 NBA Draft, getting selected by Miami. He turned out to be a steal; of the 52 people taken ahead of him, only eight appeared in more games. He and Heat forward Udonis Haslem were close, even speaking recently about the possibility of Butler considering getting involved with his former Miami teammate on some business ventures.

Chan Shih-chang (TPE), Thomas Bjorn (DEN), Phachara Khongwatmai (THA), Jazz Janewattanaond (THA), Nino Bertasio (ITA), Gavin Green (MAS), Fabrizio Zanotti (PAR), Daisuke Takaoka (JPN)

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REQUIRED

Best of the Rest

CONI steps in: Italy's Olympic

Committee (CONI) on Thursday

Italian football federation (FIGC).

appointed Roberto Fabbricini as com-

missioner to oversee the crisis-ridden

CONI secretary general Fabbricini

will be assisted by former AC Milan star

Alessandro "Billy" Costacurta and legal

expert Angelo Clarizia. The trio were ap

pointed after the FIGC election failed to

produce a new president, two-and-a-half

months after the national team crashed

out of the World Cup precipitating a

crisis. The vacuum extends beyond the

A, has only had an interim president for

almost a year and the national team has

no coach, following Gian Piero Ventura's

dismissal. (AFP)

FIGC as the Italian top division, Serie

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Accounts Manager & Senior Accountant

chief executive Stewart Regan stepped down on Thursday following criti-cism over the delay in finding a new

Last week Northern Ireland boss

Michael O'Neill turned down an offer

new deal to remain in his current role until 2024.

to take charge, instead agreeing a

"I have devoted my time in

ing, developing and promoting

Scotland to modernising, protect-

the game, whilst facing into some

extremely challenging head winds

during my time in the job," Regan

said in a statement released by the

SFA. "While it has been tough, I am

proud to leave having overseen a

period of significant change and

substantial growth." (AFP)

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KFH defeat NBK to grab Plate Trophy

Boubyan Bank crowned champions in Cup finals

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 1: On the weekend of Jan 27, Kuwait Cricket held the grand finals upon the completion of all the league matches of the NBK Trophy

NBK Trophy sponsored by NBK, is the first tournament of the 2017-18 season for the Bank's league.

The plate finals was played between KFH and NBK whereas CBK and Boubyan bank were competing for the Cup finals.

The grand finals along with the presentation ceremony were held at the pic-turesque Entertainment City ground in a grand style with live commentary and DJ along with snacks.

Dignitaries from all the banks witnessed exciting and entertaining matches in a fun filled environment. Kiyan. Mohammed Ziad and Richard Nazareth - Manager of NBK Cricket team from NBK; Paul Dawood, GM — Operations and Talal Al Nassar — Councilor for cricket from CBK; Abdulla Al Saif, Head of media and PR services graced the event with their presence.

Kuwait Cricket Council led by the Chairman Mahmood Bastaki along with Sajid Ashraf, Rishi D. Jayan, Robert D'souza and Naveen Dhananjayan were present for the occasion

The dignitaries from the banks and KC council members handed over the trophies for the winners, runners-up and top individual performers of the tournament. Gifts were presented to all team members of the Cup winners Boubyan, Cup runners-up CBK and Plate winners KFH. The presentation ceremony was conducted professionally by Umer Slahuddin — Senior KC marketing member along with support from KC marketing team members Sibtain Raza, Asad Ali Shah and Husnain.

Match Briefs:

Plate Finals: In the plate finals of the day, KFH defeated NBK by 4 wickets in a nail biting finish to the match. NBK batting first scored 160 for the loss of 5 wickets. In reply KFH started the chase well by scoring 80 of the first 10 overs for the



Faraiuddin, captain of Boubyan receiving Cup.



Abid Mustaq — Man of the finals

loss of 1 wicket, but with the fall of a few more wickets at regular intervals, the target looked a bit difficult with 13 required off the last 2 overs but with Saad Khalid at the crease, the target was achieved with ease as he ploughed two huge sixes finishing off the target 18.4 overs, with him being declared as the man of the match for his 37 runs and 2 wicket haul.

Boubyan Bank won the toss and without any hesitation decided to bat first on good flat track posting huge total of 214

runs with major contributions from Abid Mushtaq scoring 69 runs and Sarfaraz Kazi scoring 60 runs well supported by Imran Kaskar who scored a quick 39 runs of 24 balls. In reply Commercial Bank of Kuwait started well with the run chase by being aggressive from the very first over by scoring 15 runs, but with the fall of wickets especially of Diju and Nitin, thereafter could not help their cause and could finally just manage 114 runs at the end of their allotted 20 overs. Abid Mushtaq was declared as the man



Mahmoud Bastaki welcoming NBK dignitary.

of the match for his knock of 69 runs in

This year certain special awards were given by the Kuwait Cricket management which were the best bowler given to Sajid Kalam from Ahli United Bank, best batsman given to Amir Javid from Boubyan Bank and the best all-rounder given to Zahid Khan from Kuwait Finance House (KFH).

Congratulations to all the winners, runners up and individual performers of

US prosecutors reportedly probe global sports corruption - NYT

NEW YORK, Feb 1, (AFP): US prosecutors are casting a wide net in a probe of global sports corruption but are now particularly interested in the IAAF's awarding of two of its Athletics World Championships, the New York Times reported Wednesday.

Citing a grand jury subpoena it had obtained, the newspaper said the Justice Department "is exploring possible racketeering, money laundering and honest services fraud charges" related to two Athletics World Championships events and to business executives who have consulted on bids for other elite competitions.

The IAAF, awarded its 2019 World Championships to Doha and the 2021 championships to Eugene, Oregon.

The US Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York declined to comment on the report. "We won't confirm nor deny the existence of an investigation," a spokesperson told AFP.

The office, located in Brooklyn, New York, is the same one that has spent years investigating football's world governing FIFA, resulting in ruption charges that rocked the organization.

The office has also investigated systematic doping in

Tourists 187-1 at stumps on 2nd day

De Silva hits ton in strong Sri Lanka reply

Individuals summoned to provide information, including personal and corporate bank records, have been asked to appear in federal court in Brooklyn as soon as this week," the newspaper said.

A spokeswoman for the IAAF told the Times that the organiza-

US



cooperate. T h e awarding of the 2019 and 2021 Athletics World Championships has already been the subject of investigation in France, where Lamine Diack has been barred from leaving the country since being charged with accepting bribes to cover up doping by Russian athletes during his IAAF presidency

His son Papa Massata Diack is also being investigated same offenses and also claims he accepted a bribe to help Rio de Janeiro win the 2016 Olym-

from 1999 to 2015.

Kohli ton leads India to six-wicket victory

Tourists lead SA 1-0 in series

DURBAN, South Africa, Feb 1, (AFP): Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane shared a 189-run third wicket partnership and took India to a comfortable six-wicket win in the first one-day international against South Africa at Kingsmead on Thursday.

Kohli made 112 – extending his record of centuries in one-day run chases to 20 - and Rahane scored

CRICKET

79 as India reached the winning target of 270 with 27 balls to spare. 'It was quite special," said Kohli. "The first game of the series is always important and we wanted to take the

confidence of the last Test into here." Kohli, who now has 33 one-day centuries, said he enjoyed batting in a chase.

"It's easier. You can break down a total when you have a number on the board, you know exactly what you want to do against each bowler. It suits my game plan."

The India captain praised Rahane after their partnership took India to within 14 runs of victory before both fell to catches in the deep.

"He capitalised on that number four spot which we have been wanting to sort out for a while now," said Kohli. India ended a sequence of 17 succes-

sive home wins by South Africa and comprehensively outplayed the team that went into the match as the topranked one-day international team.

Second-ranked India controlled most of the match despite a century by



India's Virat Kohli bats during the ODI between South Africa and India at the Kingsmead Stadium Durban, South Āfrica on Feb 1. (AP)

South Africa captain Faf du Plessis.

India's decision to pick two wrist spinners paid off as Yuzvendra Chahal and Kuldeep Yadav shared five wickets and were mainly responsible for restricting South Africa to 269 for eight.

Du Plessis made 120 off 112 balls but it was only late in the innings that South Africa were able to lift their scoring rate on a slow pitch after slumping to 134 for five in 27.5 overs.

Du Plessis shared partnerships of 74 with Chris Morris and 56 with Andile Phehlukwayo for the sixth and seventh wickets.

"Those two wrist spinners have been the difference for us," said Kohli. Breaking that middle order was very

crucial. Leg-spinner Chahal took two for 45 and left-arm wrist spinner Yadav took three for 45.

Du Plessis admitted: "We didn't bat well enough. India bowled really well and we were 50 to 70 runs short.

Scoreboard

C. Morris b Kuldeep Yadav.

DURBAN, South Africa, Feb 1, (AFP): Scores in the first One-Day International between South Africa and India at Kingsmead on Thursday: SOUTH AFRICA Q. de Kock Ibw b Chahal H. Amla lbw b Bumrah. F. du Plessis c Pandya b Kumar A. Markram c Pandya b Chahal. J. Duminy b Kuldeep Yadav D. Miller c Kohli b Kuldeep Yadav

A. Phehlukwayo not out.... K. Rabada run out (Dhoni) M. Morkel not out. Extras (lb3, nb1, w2)..... Total (8 wkts, 50 overs . Did not bat: Imran Tahir Fall of wickets: 1-30 (Amla), 2-83 (De Kock), 3-103 (Markram), 4-122 (Duminy),

5-134 (Miller), 6-208 (Morris), 7-264 (Du Ples

Bowling: Kumar 10- 1-71-1 (1w), Bumrah 10-0-56-1 (1w), Pandya 7-0-41-0 (1nb), Chahal 10-0-45-2, Kuldeep Yadav 10-0-34-3, Jadhav 3-0-19-0 R. Sharma c De Kock b Morkel

H. Pandya not out... M. Dhoni not out.... Extras (lb6, w11).

wan), 3-256 (Rahane), 4-262 (Kohli) Did not bat: K. Jadhav, B. Kumar, Kuldeep Yadav, J. Bumrah, Y. Chahal Bowling: Morkel 7-0-35-0 (1w), Rabada 9.3-0-48-0, Morris 7-0-52-0 (2w), Imran Ta-hir 10-0-51-0, Phehlukwayo 8-0-42-2 (2w),

Duminy 2-0-16-0 (1w), Markram 2-0-20-0 (1w)
Result: India won by six wickets
Toss: South Africa Umpires: Ian Gould (ENG), Bongani Jele (RSA) TV umpire: Aleem Dar (PAK)

Match referee: Andy Pycroft (ZIM) Remaining matches: Feb 7, Cape Town Feb 10. Johannesburg Feb 13, Port Elizabeth Feb 16. Centurion

CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh, Feb 1, (AFP): Dhananjaya de Silva struck a century and shared 187 runs in an unbroken second wicket stand with Kushal Mendis as Sri Lanka gave a strong reply to Bangladesh in the first Test in Chittagong on Thursday. De Silva made an unbeaten 104 while

Mendis hit 83 not out, guiding Sri Lanka to 187-1 at stumps on the second day. Earlier, Rangana Herath and Suranga Lakmal took three wickets each to help the visitors dismiss Bangladesh for 513

in their first innings. The pair came together after spinner Mehedi Hasan got rid of Dimuth Karunaratne for a duck shortly after Bangladesh's innings ended with skip-per Mahmudullah Riyad unbeaten on

CRICKET

De Silva led Sri Lanka's batting charge with his aggressive approach and brought his fourth Test hundred off 122 balls with a cover drive off left-arm spinner Taijul Islam.

This is de Silva's second successive Test century after scoring an unbeaten 119 in Sri Lanka's last match against India in New Delhi in December.

Bangladesh, who are now leading Sri Lanka by 326 runs, wasted two reviews against Mendis and also dropped two chances offered by the right-hander.

Mehedi dropped Mendis on four off paceman Mustafizur Rahman at second slip, before Imrul Kayes grassed another chance — this time off Mehedi's bowling — with the batsman on 57.

The hosts, who resumed the day on 374-4, added 139 runs to their overnight score with Mahmudullah leading the charge on the second day.

Mahmudullah added 58 runs with debutant Sunzamul Islam for the eighth wicket, after three quick wickets rattled the home side early in the morning.

Spinner Herath brought Mominul Haque's majestic knock to an end in the third over of the day when the lefthanded batsman flicked a catch to Mendis at forward short-leg. He made 176. Mominul who hit 16 fours and a six, faced 214 balls and added just one run to his overnight score.

Herath struck again as Mosaddek Hossain lofted a catch to Lakshan

Olympic officials failed to act on Nassar 'sex abuse' claims

NEW YORK, Feb 1, (RTRS): US Olympic Committee officials were told in 2015 that an investigation by USA Gymnastics uncovered possible criminal sexual abuse by team doctor Larry Nassar but they failed to intervene, The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday.

USA Gymnastics then-president Steve Penny called Scott Black-mun, the chief executive of the US Olympic Committee, in July 2015 with a request for guidance on how to handle allegations Nassar had sexually abused gymnasts, the Journal said, citing people familiar with the matter.

Nassar pleaded guilty to sexual assault in a Michigan court and received a sentence of up to 175 years in prison on Jan 24 On the call, Penny told Blackmun

after a gymnast described what anpeared to be a sexual assault by Nassar, the newspaper reported. Blackmun told Penny to "do what he had to do," but provided no fur-

he planned to alert law enforcement

ther guidance to USA Gymnastics in the months to come on how to handle the matter, it said.

Blackman told the Journal that he had urged Penny to turn over the case to law enforcement, and that the USOC's own upcoming investigation would examine what individuals knew about Nassar and when,

the newspaper said.

Scoreboard

Sandakan at mid-on after making just Mehedi took Bangladesh past 400 with a lovely straight drive off paceman

Lakmal, before smashing Herath for a But he was soon run out for 20 by

Lahiru Kumara at third man. Sunzamul made 24 runs before he



against Bangladesh during the second day of the first Test cricket match in Chittagong, Bangladesh on Feb 1. (AP) was stumped off left-arm wrist spinner Sandakan.

BANGLADESH first innings (374-4 overnight) Tamim Igbal b D. Perera Imrul Kayes Ibw b Sandakan Mominul Haque c Mendis b Herath..... Mushfiqur Rahim c Dickwella b Lakmal Liton Das b Lakmal Mahmudllah not out Mosaddek Hossain c Sandakan b Herath Taijul Islam b Herath Mustafizur Rahman c Dickwella b Lakmal Extras (nb 4, w5)..... Total (all out; 129.5 overs).

Karunaratne c Kayes b Mehedi Mendis not out.....

D. De Silva not out... Total (one wicket. 48 overs) Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Karunaratne)

To Bat: D. Chandimal, N. Dickwella, R. Silva, D. Perera, R. Herath, S. Lakmal, L. Sandakan, L. Bowling: Mustafizur 7-1-31-0, Sunzamul 15-1-52-0, Mehedi 8-0-45-1, Taijul 17-3-56-0, Mosaddek

1-0-3-0 Toss: Bangladesh Umpires: Rod Tucker (AUS), Marais Erasmus (SA) .TV Umpire: Joel Wilson (WI) Match Referee: David Boon (AUS)

friday - (all times are kuwait local) 08:00 poland vs kazakhstan/futsal bein sports 8hd 09:00 napoli vs bologna/soccer bein sports 4hd 11:45 barca vs valencia/soccer 13:35 strikers vs renegades/cricket bein sports 13hd 16:30 iraq vs china/futsal bein sports 7hd 22:30 koln vs dortmund/soccer bein sports 5hd 22:45 marseille vs metz/soccer bein sports 6hd 23:00 sociedad vs coruna/soccer bein sports 7hd

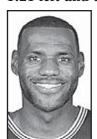
Sports

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James gets 24, Cavs hold off Heat

Celtics rout Knicks

CLEVELAND, Feb 1, (AP): LeBron James scored 24 points, Jae Crowder made a go-ahead 3-pointer with 1:21 left and the Cleveland



Cavaliers began a long stretch without injured All-Štar **Kevin** Love by holding off the Mi-Heat ami 91-89 on Wednesday

The Cavs rebounded from a troubling loss at Detroit Cleveland gave up 125 points to the undermanned Pistons and prevented the Heat from overtaking them for

BASKETBALL

third place in the Eastern Conference standings.

Cleveland played its first game since Love broke his left hand against the Pistons. The five-time All-Star is consulting with surgeons in New York, and it's possible he'll undergo an operation as early as Thursday. Love, who could miss two months, already has screws in the hand from a previous procedure after he broke it in 2009 with Minnesota.

Goran Dragic scored 18 and Josh Richardson 15 to lead the Heat, who went just 3 of 28 on 3-pointers.

Celtics 103, Knicks 73

In Boston, Terry Rozier filled in nicely for Kyrie Irving, logging his first career triple-double in his first NBA start and leading Boston over New York.

Rozier had 17 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists to become the second player in NBA history with a tripledouble in his first start, joining Tony Wroten for Philadelphia on Nov 13, 2013, according to Elias Sports Bureau. Irving was sidelined by a bruised right quadriceps after he got hurt during Monday's win in Denver.

Marcus Morris scored 21 points for the Celtics, and Jayson Tatum had 15. Al Horford and Jaylen Brown scored 14 apiece.

Morris left late in the third quarter

with a bruised left hip.
Enes Kanter had 17 points and 17 rebounds for the Knicks, and Kristaps Porzingis scored 16.

Trail Blazers 124, Bulls 108

In Portland, Ore, CJ McCollum scored a franchise-record 28 points in the first quarter and finished with a



on Jan 31, 2018, in Indianapolis. Indiana won 105-101. (AP)

career-high 50 through three as Portland took advantage of short-handed

McCollum's 28 points in the opening quarter were the most in the NBA this season. His final tally was nine points shy of the team record set by Damian Lillard last season.

Lillard also sat out the final period after adding 13 points and seven assists for the Trail Blazers, who led by as many as 29. It was Portland's fourth straight win overall, a season high, and the club's eighth in a row

Zach LaVine had a season-best 23 points in Chicago's fifth consecutive

Nets 116, 76ers 108

In New York, Spencer Dinwiddie scored 27 points, D'Angelo Russell added 22 in his best performance since returning from knee surgery, and Brooklyn snapped a four-game skid with a victory over Philadel-

Rookie center Jarrett Allen, making his first start at home, had 16 points and 12 rebounds for the Nets, who took charge of a close game with an 11-0 run early in the fourth quarter.

Dinwiddie had six points during the spurt and a pair of recent 76ers contributed the other five in the first meeting since a trade between the teams last month.

Joel Embiid had 29 points and 14 rebounds for the 76ers (24-24), who dropped their third straight.

Ben Simmons scored 24 and J.J. Redick had 20 in his return from a seven-game absence with a leg

Magic 127, Lakers 105

In Orlando, Fla, Marreese Speights scored 21 points in his second start of the season, Evan Fournier added 19 and Orlando ran away from Los Angeles in the third quarter.

Winning for only the fourth time in 24 games, the Magic made a franchise-record nine 3s in a 43-point third period, their highest-scoring quarter of the season. They shot 18



Dallas Mavericks guard Dennis Smith Jr (1) has his shot blocked by Phoenix Suns forward Josh Jackson during the second half of an NBA basketball game on Jan 31, 2018, in Phoenix. The Suns defeated the Mavericks 102-88. (AP)

arc in the game. With 15 points and six assists, Elfrid Payton was one of seven players to score in double figures for the

for 32 (56 percent) from behind the

Magic (15-35). Julius Randle and Jordan Clarkson scored 20 each for the Lakers, who never led after the first quarter.

Pacers 105, Grizzlies 101

In Indianapolis, Myles Turner had 15 points and 11 rebounds in his return to the starting lineup, and

Indiana beat Memphis for its third

Turner gave the Pacers a 102-101 lead by hitting two free throws with

straight win.

34 seconds left. With two seconds remaining, Wayne Selden missed a floater in the lane that would have given the

Grizzlies the lead. Indiana came up with the rebound and sealed it at the foul line with less than a second left.

All five Pacers starters scored in double digits. Bojan Bogdanovic and Darren Collison each had 21 points, Victor Oladipo added 13 and Thaddeus Young had 10.

Marc Gasol had 23 points and nine rebounds for Memphis. Selden led the Grizzlies with 24 points but was ejected with 0.7 seconds remaining after arguing he was fouled on his missed shot.

Hornets 123, Hawks 110

In Atlanta, Kemba Walker hit a career-high nine 3s and scored 38 points, leading Charlotte to a dominant win over Atlanta.

The Hornets never trailed while building double-digit leads in each

Dwight Howard had 20 points and 12 rebounds in his return to Atlanta after spending one season with his hometown Hawks. It was Howard's second double-double in less than a week against the Hawks. He had 18 points and 15 rebounds in Charlotte's 121-110 victory Friday.

Nicolas Batum had 10 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for Charlotte.

Suns 102, Mavericks 88

In Phoenix, Rookie forward Josh Jackson matched his career best with 21 points, T.J. Warren added 20 and Phoenix stopped a five-game losing streak by handing Dallas its fifth loss in a row and eighth in nine games.

Suns backup point guard Isaiah Canaan broke his left ankle in a gruesome injury late in the first

Marquese Chriss added 15 points and 12 rebounds for the Suns, who beat Dallas for the fourth time in a row dating to last season.

NBA Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, games on Wedne		RS): Results and	d standings fro	m the NBA	Brooklyn Cleveland		116 Phila 91 Mian	delphia	108 89
Indiana	suay.	105 Mer	nphis	101	Boston		103 New		73
Orlando			akers	105	Portland		124 Chica		108
Charlotte		127 LA 1		110	Phoenix		102 Dalla		88
Chanotte				110	FIIOEIIIX				00
		Eastern Conferenc Atlantic Division	-				Western Conference Northwest Division		
	W	L	PCT	GB		W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	37	15	.712	-	Minnesota	32	22	.593	
Toronto	34	15	.694	1-1/2	Oklahoma City	30	21	.588	0-1/2
Philadelphia	24	24	.500	11	Portland	29	22	.569	1-1/2
New York	23	29	.442	14	Denver	26	25	.510	4-1/2
Brooklyn	19	33	.365	18	Utah	22	28	.440	8
DIOOKIYII		Central Division							
	W	L	PCT	GB		W	Pacific Division L	PCT	GB
Cleveland	30	20	.600	-	Golden State	40	11	.784	
Indiana	29	23	.558	2	LA Clippers	25	25	.500	14-1/2
Milwaukee	27	22	.551	2-1/2	LA Lakers	19	31	.380	20-1/2
Detroit	23	26	.469	6-1/2	Phoenix	17	34	.333	23
Chicago	18	33	.353	12-1/2	Sacramento	16	34	.320	23-1/2
		Southeast Divisio							
	W	L	PCT	GB		W	L	PCT	GB
Miami	29	22	.569	-	Houston	36	13	.735	
Washington	28	22	.560	0-1/2	San Antonio	34	19	.642	4
Charlotte	21	29	.420	7-1/2	New Orleans	27	23	.540	9-1/2
Orlando	15	35	.300	13-1/2	Memphis	18	32	.360	18-1/2
	15	36	.294	14	Dallas	16	35	.314	21

Mourinho slams his flops

Quick-fire Spurs rock Man United

LONDON, Feb 1, (AFP): Jose Mourinho accused his Manchester United stars of failing to follow instructions after Christian Eriksen scored just 11 seconds into Tottenham's 2-0 win at Wembley.

United boss Mourinho was furious with his side's sloppy defending



Tottenham Hotspur's Colombian defender Davinson Sanchez (back) out-jumps Manchester United's Chilean striker Alexis Sanchez (front), during the English Premier League football match between Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United at Wembley Stadium in London on Jan 31, 2018. (AFP)

as they made a host of mistakes that allowed Eriksen to blast Tottenham ahead with the joint second fastest goal in Premier League history.

Phil Jones allowed Harry Kane to win a header from the kick-off and, with the rest of the United defence caught flat-footed, Dele Alli pounced with a deft pass that Eriksen steered home from close-range.

Adding insult to injury for Mourinho, Jones booted a Kieran Trippier cross into his own net midway through the first half to double Tottenham's lead. United's first defeat in nine league

games would have been even more painful had the hosts converted more of the numerous chances they created. Mourinho had no doubt where the

blame lay as he criticised his players for failing to follow the warnings he had given about Tottenham's aggressive start to matches. "I don't think it is very normal to concede a goal like we did after 15 seconds," he said.

"It is especially ridiculous because the players, they watch it before, we analyse opponents and work on opponents' dynamics and routines. "The players they knew the long

ball, they knew that Harry Kane - before the kick-off, is already inside the opponent's half. We knew everything. 'Then we don't press the ball — one mistake. We don't pick the ball in the

air - second mistake. "We don't win the second ball on Burnley vs City beln SPORTS 2 HD, 11 HD 15:30 local (Saturday) Leicester vs Swansea belN SPORTS 1 HD 18:00 local (Saturday) United vs Huddersfield beln SPORTS 2 HD, 11 HD 18:00 local (Saturday)

Bournemouth vs Stoke beIN SPORTS 4 HD 18:00 local (Saturday) **Brighton vs West Ham beln SPORTS 7 HD** 18:00 local (Saturday)

20:30 local (Saturday) Palace vs Newcastle beln SPORTS 2 HD, 11 HD

Arsenal vs Everton beln SPORTS 2 HD,

17:15 local (Sunday) Liverpool vs Spurs beln SPORTS 2 HD, 11 HD 19:30 local (Sunday) Watford vs Chelsea belN SPORTS 2 HD.

23:00 local (Monday)

the ground — third mistake. We don't cover the inside when Eriksen comes four mistakes. "Four mistakes after 15 seconds and you are losing 1-0 against a good team.'

With second placed United clinging to faint hopes of catching leaders Manchester City, it was a badly-timed meltdown from Mourinho's men.

Ozil 'commits' to 3-yr Arsenal deal

LONDON, Feb 1, (AFP): German playmaker Mesut Ozil ended speculation over his future at Arsenal by agreeing a new threeyear deal with the Premier League giants on Thursday.

"3 more years with @ Arsenal! It's been one of the most important decisions of my footballing career and that's why I had to think hard and talk with everyone who's important to me," Ozil, 29, posted on his Instagram account.

"Good things take time! In the end I let my heart decide. As I always said, I feel at home here and I'm highly motivated to achieve big things in the next few years.

Ozil's previous deal had just six months left to run and his decision to stay caps a momentous few days for the Gunners following the capture of Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang from Borussia Dortmund for a club record fee.

Aubameyang and Ozil will be joined by Henrikh Mkhitaryan in a new-look frontline after the Armenian joined as part of a swap deal that saw the wantaway Alexis Sanchez join Manchester United last month.



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